

Caribou-Targhee National Forest
FIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN
2005



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Fire Management Leadership**

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I. INTRODUCTION

Fire Management Plans are developed for guidance in managing the fire program on a specific unit, in this case the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. This plan recognizes both fire management as an inherent part of natural resource management and includes a full range of fire management actions consistent with the Land and Resource Management Plans to ensure adequate fire suppression capability and to support fire reintroduction effects. This Fire Management Plan has been written in compliance with the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review (FSM 5101, 5103, 5106, and 5108) which requires the development of a Fire Management Plan (FMP) for all areas subject to wildland fires.

A. Collaboration

The Caribou-Targhee National Forest (C-T NF) has undergone extensive Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) review and revision over the last few years. Through collaboration with the public and neighboring land and resource management agencies, the Targhee side of the forest plan was revised in 1997. Through a similar effort the Caribou side of the forest was completed in the winter of 2003. A separate plan was developed for the Curlew National Grasslands in 2002. These grasslands are located within the Westside District boundaries on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. These three plans give direction for management of the C-T NF, including fire.

The location of the C-T NF enables unique cooperation and involvement with a variety of agencies. Through Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's), Annual Operating Plans (AOP's) and Contractual Agreements the C-T is able to involve a number of agencies in the implementation of its FMP. These key players include; Federal Agencies (Upper Snake River District BLM, Salmon-Challis, Wasatch-Cache, Beaverhead-Deerlodge, Bridger-Teton, Custer, Gallatin, Shoshone National Forests, Grand Teton and Yellowstone National Parks), state and local agencies (Idaho Department of State Lands, Idaho Department of Corrections, Utah Department of Natural Resources, and local fire departments).

B. Link to Policy

This FMP incorporates the: Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review 1995; Wildland and Prescribed Fire Management Policy and Implementation Procedures Reference Guide 2005 (FSM 5108); Managing Impacts of Wildfires on Communities and the Environment, and Protection People and Sustaining Resources in Fire Adapted Ecosystems – A Cohesive Strategy; A Collaborative Approach for Reducing Wildland Fire Risk to Communities and the Environment; and the 10 Year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan. This FMP follows the interagency fire management plan template developed in 2003, which outlines a detailed program of action to carry out fire management policies (FSH 5109.19).

C. Relationship to Land and Resource Management Planning

Compliance requirements with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) guidelines have been satisfied through development of a Record of Decisions from the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) developed for the Caribou-Targhee National Forest Land and Resource Management Plans and revisions, all of which can be found at the Caribou-Targhee Forest Service Headquarters in Idaho Falls Idaho. These requirements ensure a prudent assessment and balance between a federal action and any potential effects of that action, leading to consensus between fire managers, agency resource specialists, and the public regarding this interagency fire program. Any constraints or limitations imposed on the fire management program are also included.

D. Authorities

The following acts authorize and guide fire management activities for the protection of National Forest System lands and resources on the C-T NF:

- Organic Administration Act, Act of Jun 4th, 1897 (16 U.S.C. 551)
- Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act, Act of July 22, 1937 (7 U.S.D. 1010, 1011)
- Wilderness Act, Act of September 3, 1964 (16 U.S.C. 1131, 1132)
- National Forest Management Act, Act of October 22, 1976 (16 U.S.C. 1600 et seq.)
- Clean Air Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.)
- Healthy Forests Restoration Act, Act of November 20, 2003

These additional authorities allow the C-T NF to provide wildland fire protection on other Federal, State, and Private lands covered by contractual agreements.

- Economy Act of 1932, Act of Jun 30, 1932 (41 U.S.C. 686)
- Granger-Thye Act, Act of April 24, 1950 (16 U.S.C. 572)
- Reciprocal Fire Protection Act, Act of May 27, 1955 (42 U.S.C. 1856)
- Wildfire Suppression Assistance act, Act of April 7, 1989 (42 U.S.C. 1856)

The C-T NF does not take responsibility, oversight and accountability lightly. Authority is not doled out. This is not a decentralized organization, nor is it truly a democratic one either (one person, one vote). Program Leaders have the authority to direct suppression and fire use programs through oversight, guidance, process evaluation and desired results. These leaders have the right to make timely decisions based upon the best available information, within the bounds of accepted standards and with appropriate explanation. In our daily fire management operations, the nature of some decisions may not allow for a real-time explanation; however, team ownership in decisions is desired. Ownership is held securely with the understanding that an explanation is expected and forthcoming. In the support of the policy and objectives listed above, the following documentation and policy identifies specific positions and the associated responsibilities.

Regional Forester (RF): Ensures that fire management direction is adequate enough to guide regional employees and that it is integrated into Land and Resource Management Plans.

Forest Supervisor (FS): Incorporates fire management direction into the forest Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMPs). The FS identifies the most efficient level of program for the management of wildland fire to meet C-T Forest land and resource management direction. Will also establish and implement a fuels management program, which supports fire management direction in the Forest LRMPs. The Forest Supervisor provides oversight of all Forest-wide fire management activities and is responsible for the safety of all personnel involved in those activities. Oversight includes establishing expectations for (1) periodic preparedness reviews and proficiency testing; (2) identifying the appropriate management response for a wildland fire and the necessary organization to manage a specific response based upon a risk assessment; (3) initiating, organizing and approving the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) and risk assessment process, developing the delegation of authority, and completing the briefing package for large fire management; (4) integrating prescribed fire into the LRMP, retaining signature authority for all complex burns and delegating signature authority for all intermediate burns to qualified District Rangers; and (5) retaining signature authority for all WFIP's Stages I, II and III until District Rangers can be adequately trained to take on this responsibility. Individuals authorized signature authority is found in [Appendix A \(Delegations\)](#).

District Ranger (DR): Provides oversight of all District-wide fire management activities and is directly responsible for the safety of all personnel involved in those activities on their respective districts. Oversight includes active participation in the: (1) periodic preparedness reviews and proficiency testing; (2) identification of the appropriate management response for a wildland fire, ensuring the assigned IC is made known to all and developing the necessary organization to manage a specific response based upon a risk assessment; (3) initiation, organization and collaboration with the ZFMO in the WFSA/WFIP planning and risk assessment process, defining the objectives in the delegation of authority, completing the briefing package for large fire management and identifying the Resource Advisor; (4) integration prescribed fire at the project planning level, delegated signature authority for all intermediate burns, and delegates DR signature authority to Acting's based upon their ability to meet prerequisite knowledge, skills and qualifications, and the complexity of the burn; and (5) if they meet the qualifications, skills, and knowledge will be delegated signature authority for certain stages of WFIP's, where actual or predicted fire behavior will remain within the confines of their District [Appendix A \(Delegations\)](#).

Makes sure After Incident Reviews are completed on 10 percent of the unit's Type III, IV and V incidents. These are conducted on site and documented in the incident records as in compliance to 30-mile / South Canyon abatement policy. The DR ensures that those involved in wildland fire activities on the district comply with the 30-mile / South Canyon hazard abatement plan and general firefighter safety policies.

The DR is responsible for briefing large fire Incident Commanders regarding the fire suppression objectives, considerations and constraints.

Ensures the appropriate team is established for each wildland fire use event based on the complexity of that event as developed through guidelines found in "Wildland and Prescribed Management Policy, Implementation and Procedures Reference Guide FSM 5108".

Once the prescribed burn or wildland fire implementation plans are signed by the respective qualified DRs and FS, any deviation from the prescriptive limits requires written approval by the respective District Ranger, designated acting, or Forest Supervisor prior to implementation.

In the case of an entrapment, serious injury or fatality, DR is responsible for immediately notifying the Forest Supervisor.

Forest Ecosystem Branch Director (FEBD): Supervises the Forest Fire Management Officer and provides general direction on policy, program and fiscal management. The FEBD may serve as acting FS in the absence of the FS. Delegation of Authority for WFSA, Prescribed Fire and Fire Use Approval is identified in [Appendix A \(Delegations\)](#).

Forest Fire Management Officer (FFMO): Responsible for all aspects of the Forest's Fire Management Programs. Provides specific program direction to the Districts, fiscal management, allocation and distribution of funds specific to MEL, fire and fuels planning, coordination, situational awareness, leadership in wildland fire suppression, fire use and non-fire incidents. In the absence of the FS, may be delegated signature authority for fire use, as described under responsibilities of FS. [Appendix A \(Delegations, Fire Use Approval Authority\)](#).

Ensures annual adjustments in the FMP reflect current conditions, budget allocations and other significant considerations. FFMO provides oversight and direction in the development of the preparedness program, the Forest's FMP, mobilization guides, preparedness reviews before and during fire season, wildland fire prescriptions, appropriate management response to wildland fires, and the fire suppression training and qualifications program.

Collaborates with Geographic Area counterparts and serves as the primary forest representative who negotiates financial needs and program priorities based upon activities schedule. Provides leadership and direction to the Forest Fire Management Team (FFMT). Establishes standards, objectives and guidelines for all prescribed management ignitions and assures coordination with the Zones and Eastern Great Basin.

Coordinates workforce and equipment needs for fire management activities ensuring fire use and fire protection responsibilities do not exceed forest capabilities and meets the Geographic Area direction.

Coordinates smoke management with the Montana / Idaho Smoke Airshed Coordinator, Region's Fire Use Specialist, Air Quality Specialist and the adjacent Forests.

Coordinates with the Forest Supervisor and District Rangers to organize and identify team members needed to complete a WFSA or WFIP, Stage III, prior to Forest Supervisor's approval reviews and recommends the appropriate suppression or management response. Provides leadership direction for the FFMT in establishing standards, objectives and guidelines addressing natural ignitions in wilderness and assures coordination across the Zones, Eastern Great Basin, and the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA). The FFMO coordinates with the Eastern Great Basin, other Forest(s), and GYA when tracking, monitoring and evaluating all natural ignitions occurring within the confines of the GYA. The FFMO monitors the on-going activities to assure compliance with the approved WFIPs.

Forest Fuels Manager (FFM): Responsible for coordinating Forest-wide fuels and prescribed fire management programs. This includes fire management planning to ensure consistent and integrated approach to multi-functional planning and implementation. Participates in Geographic Area and Forest-wide planning efforts, promotes wildland fire use and fuels management principles, and interdisciplinary cooperation with other resource specialists. Represents the Forest fire and fuels management organization during long-range Forest-wide planning efforts and identifies potential methods of assessment. FFM assists the FFMO in coordinating Forest-wide wildland fire suppression strategies, wildland fire use strategies and the management of non-fire incidents. In the absence of the FFMO, may serve as the Acting FFMO.

The FFM ensures that fuels management is incorporated and integrated into all levels of planning and measured against the cost of operations.

Upon request, participates as a team member to assist in completing a WFSA or WFIP.

Collaborates with ZFMOs to establish and assure fire management standards, objectives and guidelines are made part of the approved WFIPs. Participates in developing, tracking, monitoring and evaluating all WFIPs within the Caribou-Targhee National Forest and recommends necessary adjustments to the FFMO. Tracks all fuels projects through the National Fire Plan Operations Reporting System (NFPORS) and maintains the Forest's Remote Automated Weather System (RAWS) program.

Forest Fire Management Specialist (FFMS) (Fire Prevention, Mitigation, and Wildland Fire Use): Prepares the Forest Prevention Plan. The FFMS collaborates with counterparts across the Forest to develop a comprehensive prevention information and education plan promoting fire prevention to Forest users and interface communities. The individual gives formal and informal talks providing key fire messages through personal contacts specific to laws, rules, restrictions or closures and coordinates fire prevention events. The position serves as the primary contact by local, state, and other federal government agencies for all National Fire Plan prevention programs and available funding through federal fire related grants.

The FFMS is the primary contact for all fire training on the C-T and is the lead individual in developing input for the C-T Wildland Fire Use Guidebook. FFMS assists the FFMO in coordinating Forest-wide wildland fire suppression strategies, wildland fire use strategies and the management of non-fire incidents. In the absence of the FFMO, may serve as the Acting FFMO.

Forest Fire Planner (FFP): Responsible for the coordination, collection and assemble of data required to complete the National Fire Management Analysis (NFMAS) and Fire Program Analysis (FPA) for the Forest. The FFP analyzes Forest wide historical data along with current conditions, making recommendations to the FFMO on findings. The position analyses field unit preparedness needs: evaluates quantity and quality of data to perform an economic analysis and assists the field units in the application of that data. The FFP provides training and overview of the planning process. Responsible for the Forest out-year budget submission to meet preparedness needs. Responsible for current year budget tracking and disseminates to field units. Completes forest wide project work plans required for allocation of funds. The FFP coordinates with the Forest Financial Officer and Regional Office on completion of special need projects and requests. Inspects and verifies procedures and outputs from the economic processes to ensure compliance with established standards.

Forest Fire Business Management Specialist (FFBMS): Serves as the Section Head for Fire Business Management coordination activities at the Eastern Idaho Interagency Fire Center (EIIFC). The FFBMS provides expert advice and direction in logistical, financial, procurement, service and supply and other business management functions pertaining to emergency incident operations for the EIIFC. The FFBMS coordinates schedules and provides oversight and supervision to both expanded dispatch and local buying teams during emergency incident management operations.

The FFBMS is responsible for evaluating administrative operations during and after emergency incidents including areas of personnel timekeeping, rental and use of equipment, compensation for claims, cost effectiveness, cooperative agreements, emergency equipment rental agreements, procurements and payments.

Develops and maintains annual Service and Supply Plan, and Operating Guidelines for the EIIFC.

Develops and presents training programs in Fire Business Management for Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and AD personnel. The FFBMS coordinates with Eastern Idaho Technical College in presentation of Fire Business Management Training Courses.

Serves on Regional committees and / or teams associated with the Fire Business Management activities. Conducts studies, analysis, reviews, policy revisions and recommends changes and solutions as requested.

Forest Fire Duty Officer (FFDO): Must be at least Division Group Supervisor and ICT3 qualified. Responsible for ensuring the assigned IC is qualified, thoroughly briefed on the appropriate suppression response and tactics, and the IC is made known to the assigned firefighters. Monitoring the incident(s) to ensure the IC operates within the limits of available resources, and the appropriate ICS organization is in-place to execute the tactical actions. Provide oversight and direction in prioritizing the staffing of multiple starts across the Forest, pre-positioning firefighting resources, and coordinating with the Dispatch Center Manager to define the next days Staffing Level. Collaborates with the Zone Fire Duty Officer (ZFDOs) to ensure the Forest minimum draw down [Appendix B \(C-T Draw Down Plan\)](#) level is met on a daily basis.

Forest Aviation Officer (FAO): Responsible for the management and supervision of all Forest air operations, including the development and implementation of the Eastern Idaho Interagency Aviation Management Plan, coordination with the Forest Dispatcher and other Forest Fire Leadership. The FAO is responsible for all Forest and cooperative air operations.

The FAO is responsible for developing the master Forest-wide aerial ignition portion of the prescribed fire burn plan and reviewing site-specific aerial ignition burn plans. The position represents the forest fire management organization at the Regional level.

The FAO is responsible for the annual Interagency Aviation Management Plan update, with input from the FFMO, Dispatch Center Manager, and ZFMOs. This plan is adjusted annually to reflect current direction, budget constraints, and firefighter safety issues.

Helicopter Manager (HEMG) includes Assistant: Responsible for providing on-site helicopter and personnel management and oversight of daily helicopter operations during initial and extended attack, and other Forest projects. Ensures helitack personnel are given the appropriate training to safely and intelligently execute their assigned missions.

Will coordinates with the FAO in the development of aviation plans and documentation of helicopter operations. The individual provides clear and concise direction to all individuals and pilots participating in specific daily missions.

Dispatch Center Manager (DCM): Responsible for the management of the Forest's voice communication (Radio) system. This includes monitoring radio traffic, attention to fire detection reports and prioritizing communications based upon the single incident pre-planned dispatch guide, minimum draw down levels and other priorities, such as flight following. The DCM coordinates the management of incidents between Districts according to the Forest Dispatch Operating Plan, 2003. A copy of this plan can be found in the Eastern Idaho Interagency Fire Center.

The position is responsible for daily reports, weather and fuels data collection, and dispersal of daily and emergency weather forecasts. The individual functions as Airshed Coordinator. Supervises the Assistant Forest Dispatchers, office staff and coordinates with the FAO.

The DCM is responsible for dispatching and tracking all aircraft on the Forest, and overseeing flight plan procedures and radio communications. The individual collaborates with the Forest FDO to define the next days Staffing Level and orders the necessary resources to meet Minimum Draw down levels on a daily basis.

Zone Fire Management Officer (ZFMO) includes Assistants: Responsible for the implementation of all preparedness, suppression and fire use management activities on the District. This includes program management, supervision, training, and career enhancement and target accomplishments with strict adherence to policy, direction and plans. Zone FMOs are responsible for participating in Forest-wide wildland fire preparedness activities and assuring their respective staffing levels meet budget and safety standards.

Assures prescribed fire burn plans include: (1) operations that comply with the defined parameters; (2) development and execution are done with trained and qualified personnel; (3) organizational size and structure reflects safety, risk, and complexity; (4) if on-site conditions change during execution of the burn, ensures the appropriate contacts are made and documented accordingly; and (5) District Rangers are informed of site-specific activities. Monitors and evaluates all district prescribed management ignitions, initiates reviews as required and recommends necessary adjustments to accomplish the predetermined objectives.

Will assist the District Ranger in organizing and identifying team members to complete a WFSA or WFIP, and assure the appropriate suppression or management response is implemented.

Collaborates with the District Ranger and FFMO during the initial fire assessment, WFIP, Stage I, addressing natural ignitions as potential wildland fire use candidates within their respective administrative boundaries. The ZFMO recommends the appropriate management response to the Forest Supervisor within 2 hours of wildland fire confirmation.

Responsible for briefing the District Ranger, FFMO and Forest Supervisor on the site-specific details of the WFIP(s) prior to the decision to approve or deny the recommended response

The ZFMO ensures that those involved in wildland fire activities on the district comply with the 30-mile hazard abatement plan and general firefighter safety policies. [Appendix C \(Thirty Mile South Canyon Requirements\)](#)

Zone Fire Duty Officer (ZFDO): Must be at least ICT3 and Task Force Leader qualified. Responsible for compiling the necessary information for the morning resource lineup, communicating it to the FD, and ensuring those resources are fully qualified for their identified firefighting position. Makes sure daily morning briefings are conducted by module leaders to ensure all firefighters are aware of the fire weather forecast, previous day's wildland fire activity including resistance to control, C-T NF Staffing Level, safety items, and the ERC and BI influence on fire behavior.

This position is responsible for identifying the appropriate management or suppression response for each wildland fire on their District/Zone. On a suppression response, ensures the assigned IC is qualified, thoroughly briefed on the suppression response and associated tactics, and the IC is made known to the assigned firefighters. Monitoring the incident(s) to ensure the IC operates within the limits of available resources and the appropriate ICS organization is in-place to execute the tactical actions. Ensures the assigned IC completes performance evaluations on all out-of-forest crews and resources on all Type III, IV and V incidents, and the After Action Report is completed in a timely manner.

The ZFDO collaborates with the Forest FDO to prioritize the staffing of multiple starts across the Forest, preposition firefighting resources, and coordinates with the FDO to order the necessary resources to meet Minimum Draw down Levels. Along with DR will ensure reviews are completed on a minimum of 10 percent of their unit's Type III, IV and V incidents and document those inspections in the incident records. The ZFDO ensures that those involved in wildland fire activities on the district comply with the 30-mile hazard abatement plan and general firefighter safety policies. [Appendix C \(Thirty Mile / South Canyon Requirements\)](#)

Fire Use Manager (FUMA): The Forest Supervisor will assign A Fire Use Manager (FUMA). They may be responsible for more than one fire concurrently, but should not be responsible for more than one significant wildland fire being managed under the wildland fire use strategy. The FUMA will supervise the assigned wildland fire use operations and remain available for the duration of the fire or ensure there is a formal Transfer of Command. The Forest Supervisor will determine the remainder of the team's organization and expertise and/or the requirements set forth in the specific WFIP. The FS will make sure the type of FUMA (FUM1 or FUM2) matches the complexity of the fire use incident.

Fire Operations Specialist / Engine (FOS) includes Assistant: Responsible for the safe operation of the fire engine module while responding to wildland fires. May function as the IC on Type III, IV and V incidents based upon their NIFQS, and provide for and ensure the safety of their crew. A delegation of authority by all district rangers for all Type 3,4,5 ICs is completed annually. [Appendix C \(Thirty Mile / South Canyon Requirements\)](#).

Provides initial size up to Eastern Idaho Interagency Fire Center (EIIFC) and ensures all assigned FFTR's understand the: (1) specific incident organization including strategy, tactics and objectives; (2) safety information including LCES discussion, aviation support, and communications; and (3) fuels, weather and topography effects on fire behavior. Keeps dispatch informed, requests additional resources as necessary, and maintains records. Initiates the After Action Report discussion with the Zone Duty Officer and ensures it completed in a timely manner. Responsible for complying with and implementing National Work Rest Standards and ensuring crews are adequately rested.

Jointly develops, establishes and implements training specific to tactics, fire weather and behavior, line construction, proper equipment use, safety, and air operations. Implements a comprehensive physical training program ensuring the engine module is able to perform the required arduous firefighting duties.

The FOS participates in the Fire Use and Prescribed Fire Programs on the C-T in a variety of capacities including fire effects monitor, holding boss, ignition specialist and intermediate and basic burn boss.

Fire Fighters (FFTR's): All FFTR's are responsible for protecting themselves and other workers from injury or accidents. Some may function as the IC on Type III, IV and V incidents based upon their qualifications (Appendix A), and provide for and ensure the safety of those assigned to the incident. It is understood through periodic fire safety refreshers presented by Forest and District fire managers that individual fireline personnel have the responsibility and the right to question the actions of the IC to better understand the tactics and safety mitigation measures incorporated into executing a particular suppression response.

Responsible for learning and understanding the potential effects associated with the daily fire weather forecast, previous day's wildland fire activity including resistance to control, CTF Staffing Level, and the ERC and BI influence on fire behavior.

Without exception every FFTR will use the Incident Response Pocket Guide (January 2003) on every incident, every time. Every FFTR assumes personal responsibility for managing and meeting the work-rest requirements, and implements a comprehensive physical training program based upon their NIFQS to ensure the safe execution of their assigned firefighting duties.

Fire Qualifications for all personnel on the C-T NF can be found in [Appendix D \(Qualifications\)](#).

II. RELATIONSHIP TO LAND MANAGEMENT PLANNING AND FIRE POLICY

A. Reference To Planning and Documents

U.S. Forest Service policy is outlined in *“Protecting People and Sustaining Resources in Fire-Adapted Ecosystems, A Cohesive Strategy”*, (US Forest Service, October 13, 2000), and other applicable Federal, interagency and agency policies (FSM 5101 Fire Management Authority and FSM 5108) that require fire management plans to recognize fire protection, wildland fire use, and prescribed fire as inherent components of natural resource management. These include the full range of fire management actions consistent with the C-T NF and Curlew Grasslands Land and Resource Management Plans.

B. Reference to Policy Documents

The C-T NF Fire Management Plan is authorized by the Forest's approved Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMPs) and ensures adequate fire suppression capability and support efforts to reintroduce fire to meet land management objectives (1997, 2002 and 2003).

The Forest Plan conforms to requirements established by:

- Forest Service Manual 5100 Fire Management
- 1995 Interagency Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review
- Wildland and Prescribed Fire Management Policy Implementation Procedures reference Guide (FSM 5103 Fire Management Policy and FSM 5108 Fire Management References)
- "Protecting People and Sustaining Resources in Fire-Adapted Ecosystems, A Cohesive Strategy", U.S. Forest Service, October 13, 2000
- Other applicable federal, interagency and agency policies (FSM 5101 Fire Management Authority and FSM 5108) that require fire management plans to recognize fire protection, wildland fire use and prescribed fire as inherent components of natural resource management, and include the full range of fire management actions consistent with the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.

C. Goals and Desired Conditions

Within the framework of USFS fire management policies; the objectives of the fire management programs are to:

- Protect human life and property from wildland fire. Safety is always the primary concern of every management action.
- Restore fire to its natural role and use prescribed fire to maintain healthy and dynamic ecosystems that meet management objectives.
- Use "appropriate management response" on public lands by considering the entire range of alternatives including the possibility of suppression on one part of a wildland fire, and monitoring on another part of the same fire.
- Protect those agency-identified resources that are at risk from fire.
- Minimize adverse effects of fire suppression.
- Manage all aspect of the fire management program in a cost efficient and effective manner.

III. WILDLAND AND FIRE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

A. General Management Considerations

The following fire management plan discusses the general aspects of the fire management program on the C-T NF. This program ranges from preparedness through rehab of wildland suppression fires to the planning and implementation of the prescribed fire program, which includes wildland fire use and management ignited prescribed fire.

All natural ignitions will be either managed as a suppression fire (unwanted wildland fire) or as a wildland fire use event (beneficial wildland fire).

All unwanted wildland fires will be suppressed using the most appropriate management response. The intent is to enhance safety while preventing loss of structures and property. The top priority during the selection of suppression action will be safety of the firefighting personnel and the public, including adjacent landowners. Other priorities, which fall below safety, include protection of private property, cost containment, and suppression actions, which have the least negative affect on environmental factors.

Management Ignited Prescribed Fire and Wildland Fire Use, will be utilized to enhance ecosystem integrity and resilience while maintaining desired fuel levels. Wildland Fire Use will be utilized to accomplish LRMP direction while following policy outlined in Section IV C. of this FMP.

Wildand fires occurring in an area approved by the C-T wildland fire use guidebook may be managed as fire use fires. Under these circumstances the timeline for a wildland fire to be first evaluated as a fire use event is eight hours from fire verification an strategic fire size up (Go/No Go decision). Verification will include an accurate location and cause determination for the prospective fire. This is found in Stage I of the Wildland Fire Implementation Plan (WFIP). If a wildland fire exceeds its prescription or Maximum Management Area (MMA) and cannot be brought back in within an allowable time period (48 hours of the end of the burning prerioid) it will be designated a suppression fire. Once a fire is designated a suppression fire and assigned a P-code it may not revert back to wildland fire use status. In case of spotting, any spot occurring outside the MMA from a naturally ignited fire inside the MMA is considered as a natural process and may be treated as a separate fire available to be managed as a WFU. The appropriate management action for this new ignition will be determined separately from the original wildland fire, based on criteria specific to this fire.

Fuel management strategies are coordinated with adjacent landowners to reduce risk to life and loss of property from wildfire. All management ignited prescribed fire will have a burn plan which will address the elements described in the Wildland and Prescribed Fire Management Policy Implementation Procedures Reference Guide (FSM 5108 and 5140.32). If a prescribed fire exceeds its prescription, and cannot be brought back in within a reasonable time period or with available funds, it will be declared a wildfire and appropriate management response will be taken.

It is a continued effort to provide the most efficient and effective fire program on the C-T NF. To do so the Forest has adopted a number of agreements between affected agencies mentioned in "Section I. A. Collaboration". There is also sharing of resources between the two largest land management agencies within Southeast Idaho (BLM and USFS). The best example of this is the centralized Dispatch Center (Eastern Idaho Interagency Fire Center). This center is composed of both BLM and FS employees.

B. Wildland Fire Management Goals

The goals for fire management on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest have been expanded from those outlined in the three LRMPs. They are closely aligned with both national and regional fire management goals and new fire policy direction (National Fire Plan, Managing Impacts of Wildfires on Communities and the Environment, and Protection People and Sustaining Resources in Fire Adapted Ecosystems – A Cohesive Strategy, 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan). The following are the fire management goals that will guide development of the fire management program on the C-T NF.

GOAL 1: Achieve a program where firefighter and public safety is the highest priority in every fire management activity.

Objective: Ensure that wildland fire and prescribed fire operations cause no lost time or major injuries to either the public or firefighters.

Strategy:

- For wildland and prescribed fires, ensure that each individual meets the National Wildfire Coordinating Group standards listed in the Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualification System Guide 310-1 and FSH 5109.17. This includes the appropriate level work capacity test.
- Adhere to the requirement for unplanned ignitions, which mandate that firefighting personnel from cooperating agencies meet the qualifications of their agencies. (After initial stages, every effort will be made to utilize only personnel who meet the 310-1 standards). All personnel involved in fire management operations will receive a safety briefing that describes known hazards and required mitigating actions. Briefings will address established firefighter safety practices, current fire conditions, and current and predicted fire weather and behavior.
- On every fire management project safety responsibilities are clearly described by agency guidelines.
- Notify all forest neighbors, visitors, interagency partners, and local residents of all planned and unplanned fire management activities that could affect them.

GOAL 2: Where appropriate restore the historic role of fire as an ecological process to meet resource management objectives and to reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildland fires.

Objective: Restore fire to its natural role to the maximum extent possible and enable natural processes to function essentially unimpaired by human influence. Strive to move vegetation currently in Condition Class 3 to Condition Class 1 and 2.

Strategy:

- Coordinate multiple inventory systems and build a resource database to help better understand natural forest composition.
- Continue conducting fire history research to further understanding natural fire regimes.
- Quantify fire behavior and effects through research, monitoring and evaluation in order to refine prescriptions.
- Prescribed fire is allowed and encouraged unless prohibited by individual subsection area direction.
- Use prescribed fire to meet management goals when and where wildland fire use is unacceptable due to any management concern.
- Implement a wildland fire use program to allow wildland fire to assume its natural role.
- Maintain a qualified staff as identified in FSH 5109.17 and PMS 310-1 to implement fire use programs.
- Refine prescriptions for both prescribed fires and wildland fire use to ensure safety of the public and fire managers and capability of restoring and maintaining respective ecosystems.
- Solicit public involvement in fire programs and inform the public continually and effectively regarding the needs and benefit of prescribed fire in relation to agency goals and objectives.

GOAL 3: Fire activities are used to treat natural and activity fuels with priority on reducing risk from uncharacteristically large or intense wildland fires and protecting communities in the wildland-urban-interface.

Objective: Develop and begin implementation of a prioritized strategy for wildland-urban-interface projects in the ecological subsections where this activity is emphasized.

Strategy:

- Coordinate fuel management with adjacent landowners and bordering agencies to reduce risk to life and loss of property to wildfire.
- When developing vegetation treatment projects, give priority to those reducing fuels in the wildland-urban interface.
- Maintain a qualified staff as identified in FSH 5109.17 and PMS 310-1 to implement fire use programs.
- Develop a comprehensive fire prevention program between cooperating agencies and the public.

GOAL 4: Suppress fire in a cost effective manner where necessary to protect human life and safety, developments, structures, and sensitive resource values.

Objective: Actively suppress all wildfires not analyzed in the pre-approved C-T Wildland Fire Use Guidebook with the most appropriate management response.

Strategy:

- Attempt to prevent fire spread onto adjacent public and private lands by containing all fires within forest boundaries.
- Assess values at risk and take corrective actions when needed for each incident, to prevent fire damage to facilities and historic and cultural resources.
- Maintain a qualified staff as identified in FSH 5109.17 and PMS 310-1 capable of handling the normal-year suppression workload.
- Cooperate and communicate extensively with adjacent agencies in the management of fire. Keep interagency agreements current.
- Suppress fires or portions of fires that threaten to damage public property.
- Ensure that staff is trained in wildland fire operations and that staff managers who are responsible for fire operations understand fire policy.
- Ensure that all equipment and fire personnel remain in a state of readiness during fire season.
- Implement an effective fire prevention program during periods of extreme fire danger.

These goals improve fire prevention and suppression, assist rural communities, reduce hazardous fuels, and restore fire-adapted ecosystems.

C. Wildland Fire Management Options

The C-T NF has the capability of utilizing the full range of fire management options authorized under current forest service fire management policy. These options include suppression of all unwanted wildland fires using the most appropriate management response, prescribing fire whether it is a natural ignition managed under the wildland fire use program or human ignition under a tightly controlled prescribed burn program or utilizing non-fire applications to achieve fuels reduction around areas of special concern. Determination of options of how an area is managed will depend on subsection location identified in the land and resource management plans.

A Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) will be prepared to select the strategy for all unwanted fires which initial suppression strategy has failed or will most likely fail under forecasted circumstances. A WFSA will also be prepared for all wildland fire use events or prescribed fires, which exceed prescription. Specific requirements are outlined in the Wildland and Prescribed Fire Management Policy Implementation Guide. The responsible agency administrator will complete the WFSA. The WFSA will be revised when conditions change or assumptions critical to the success of the existing decision are proved invalid.

Wildland fire use can be utilized in those subsections identified in the LRMPs and which have been evaluated for fire use. Currently five subsections have been evaluated and may allow wildland fire use under the C-T Wildland Fire Use Guidebook. Additional subsections to be evaluated this fiscal year (2005) include the Centennials, Island Park, the Big Holes, the Pruess Ridges / Hills and Webster Ridges / Valleys. Once the evaluation is complete fire use may be allowed in these areas. Eventually all subsections will be evaluated in the upcoming years for potential fire use suitability.

Prescribed fire will be utilized where needed to achieve objectives determined in the three LRMPs. Complexity of prescribed burns will be determined in the burn plan and approval authority will follow FSM 5140 and any regional supplements. Delegation of authority for prescribed burning is found in [Appendix A \(Delegations\)](#).

Where prescribed fire or wildland fire use cannot be used to accomplish LRMP direction, non-fire applications may be utilized to achieve fuel load reductions. These applications may include but are not limited to: chipping, slashing, chaining, etc...

D. Description of Wildland Fire Management Strategies by Fire Management Units

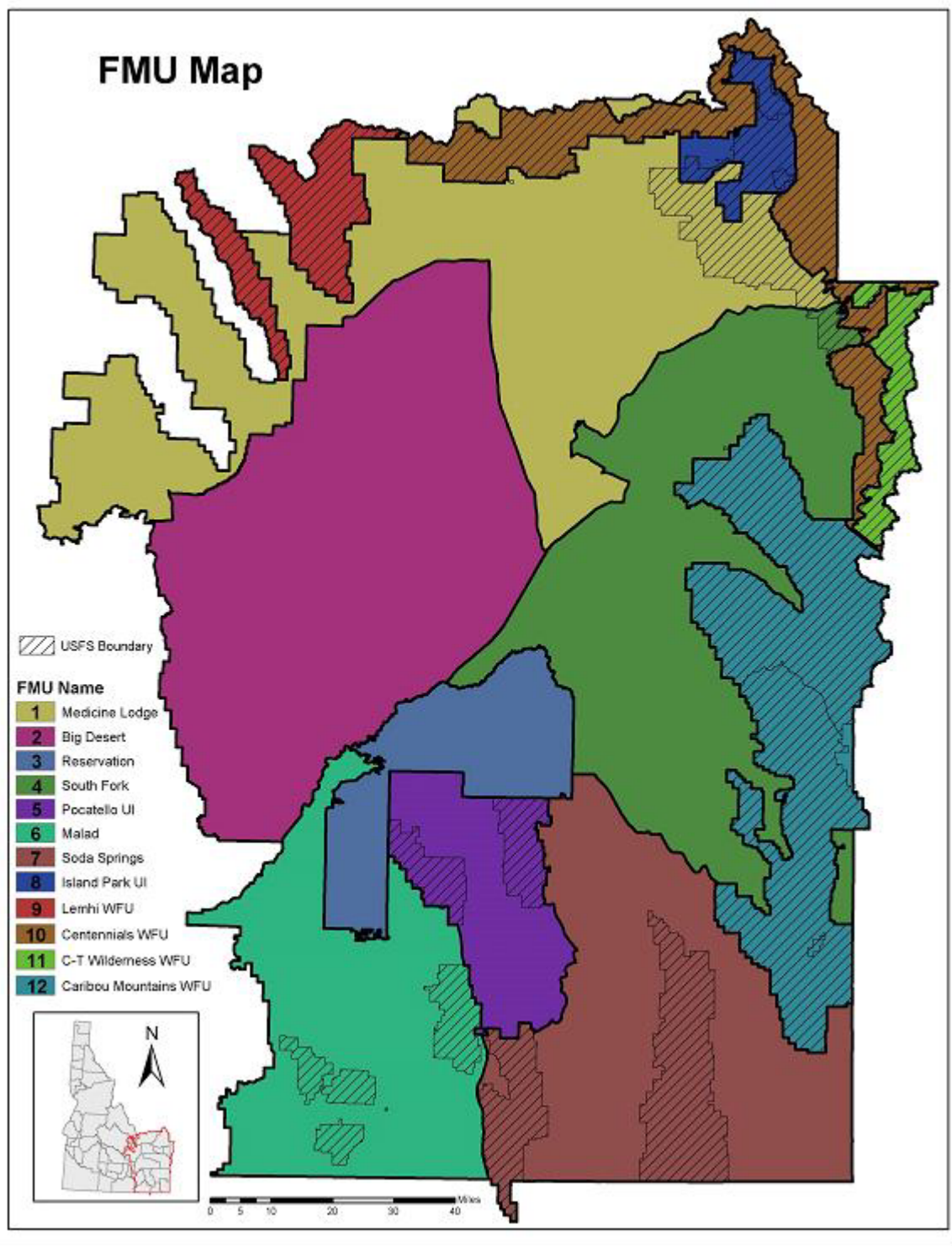
In 2004 the C-T NF was organized into seven Fire Management Zones (FMZs). Through the Fire Program Analysis Process (FPA), Eastern Idaho was divided into 12 Fire Management Units (FMU). The previous 7 Fire Management Zones fall within the new Fire Management Units. These FMU's are closely aligned cross jurisdictional boundaries when management goals are similar.

C-T Forest Service land falls within the following East Idaho FMU's:

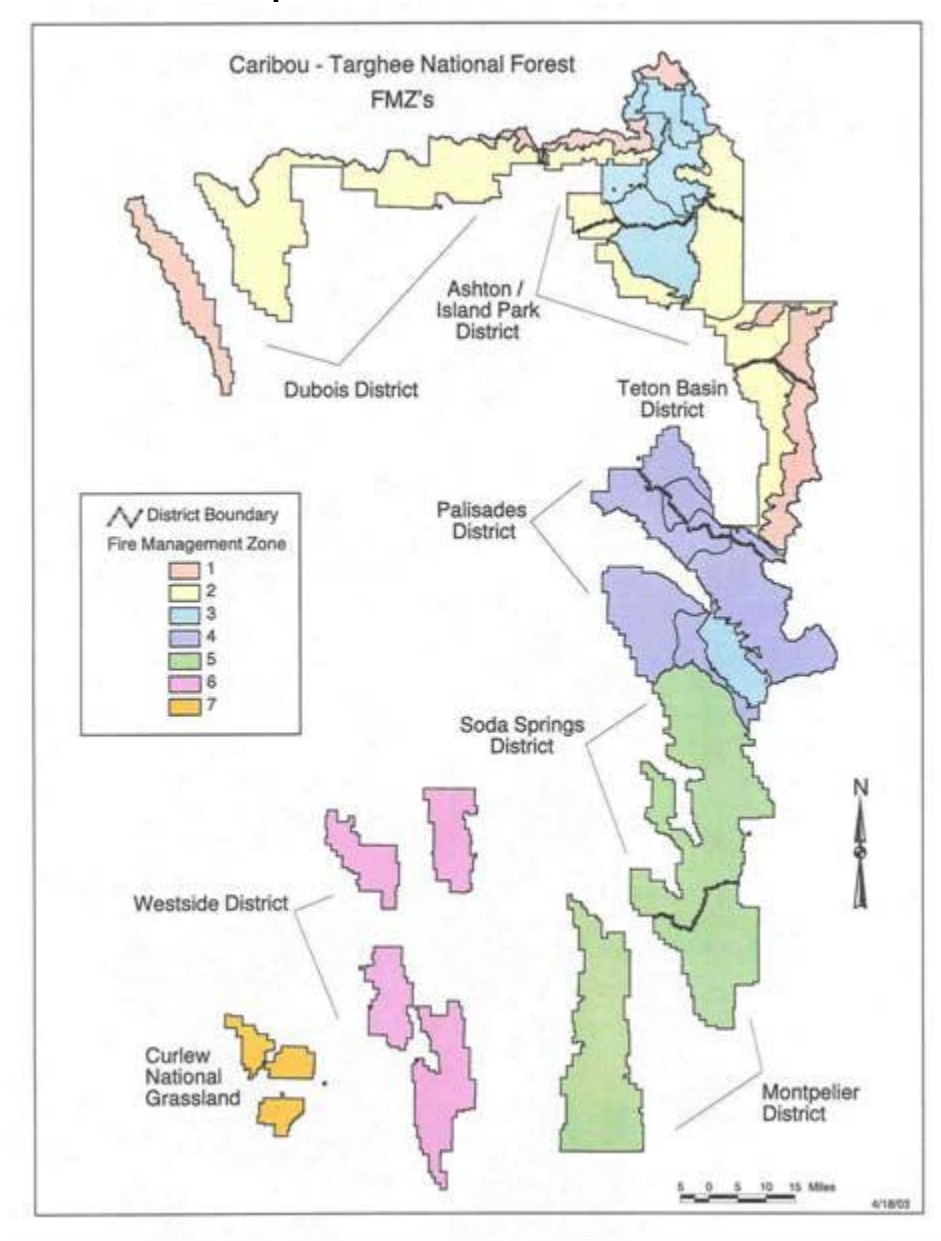
- FMU 1 Medicine Lodge (full suppression)
- FMU 5 Pocatello Urban Interface (full suppression)
- FMU 6 Malad (full suppression)
- FMU 7 Soda Springs (full suppression)
- FMU 8 Island Park Urban Interface (full suppression)
- FMU 9 Lemhi (appropriate management response including wildland fire use)
- FMU 10 Centennials (appropriate management response including wildland fire use)
- FMU 11 Caribou-Targhee Wilderness (appropriate management response including wildland fire use)
- FMU 12 Caribou Mountains (appropriate management response including wildland fire use)

Specific similar fire strategies will be implemented within each FMU. Since we are currently in the first stages of FPA there is still a reference to the old FMZ's in many documents including this one.

Ecological Subsections found in the LRMP's were aggregated into FMUs seen in the following map. FMUs were defined by fuel type, topography, elevation and slope with common management direction within the FMU boundary. FMU's cross jurisdictional boundaries. Following the FMU map is definitions of the FMZ's, Subsections, and FMU's.



Previous FMZ map:



Targhee Plan

FMZ 1: This zone is high elevation, generally lands above 8,000 feet, and includes the designated and proposed wildernesses. Management emphasis is on recreation, wildlife and range. Fire management direction is currently for the appropriate suppression response using minimum tactics and management actions. There is currently a fire use guidebook approved for the Madison-Pitchstone Plateau, the Teton Range Subsections, and Lemhi/Medicine Lodge Subsection. The Centennial Subsection is going through approval for implementation in fiscal year 2005.

FMZ 2: The zone represents the mid elevation lands on the Targhee side of the C-T NF. Management emphasis is for timber, range and wildlife. The majority of the timber producing area and high value TSI plantations are located in this FMZ. The current fire management direction is for appropriate management response with full suppression in areas identified in the Targhee Forest Land Management Plan. Accessibility will be reduced during the next decade with the implementation of the revised forest LRMP.

FMZ 3: This represents the lower elevation lands, with the management emphasis for developed recreations and fisheries. The majority of the forests developed recreation sites, summer home tracts, and organizational sites are located within this FMZ. An urban-interface situation also exists within and adjacent to this FMZ. Public concerns for fire protection is a forest priority, and fire management direction is for an immediate suppression response.

FMZ 4: This zone is a mix of mid and high elevation lands in the southern portion of the Targhee side of the forest. Access is poor in the majority of the zone. Management emphasis is wildlife, dispersed recreation, range and some timber management. The majority of the forests lightning caused fires occur in the high elevations of this zone. Current fire management direction is appropriate management response. The Caribou Mountains Subsection within the FMZ is currently in the C-T Fire Use Guidebook. The Big Holes Subsection is being entered into the guidebook in FY 2005.

Ecological Subsections identified in the Targhee LRMP are located within each of the FMZ mentioned above. Listed below are ecological subsections along with their associated Fire Management Unit (FMU) located on the northern portion of the Forest.

Lemhi/Medicine Lodge Subsection (M332Ek) / FMU 9 Lemhi WFU

This subsection includes the Lemhi Mountains and the Medicine Lodge/Beaverhead Mountains. A variety of vegetation exists with forested communities dominated by Douglas-fir and limber pine. Sagebrush / bunchgrass and mountain mahogany communities are common at lower elevations and on strong southerly exposures. Limber pine communities and alpine meadows exist at the high elevations. This subsection is rich in mining history with old mining sites and remnants of town sites. In the Birch Creek Valley four preserved brick adobe charcoal kilns remain of sixteen originally built to furnish charcoal to the Nicholia Mine.

This area contains some of the most significant Native American sites on the Forest, as well as a segment of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, two recommended wildernesses (Diamond Peak and Italian Peaks) and most of the big game found on the Forest.

About 37 percent of this subsection is forested; this is more forested land than occurred historically. Information from the early 1900s indicates that in some areas Douglas-fir has recently established itself on lands formerly dominated by grasses and sagebrush. Some riparian communities also appear to have more conifers than they did historically.

Approximately 90 percent of the forested land is in a mature age class, indicating a lack of age class diversity in the subsection. With 90 percent of the forests in Douglas-fir there is also a lack of tree species diversity. Many of the Douglas-fir stands are densely stocked. The uniformity of the tree species and age classes, as well as the dense stocking, make this area's forests more susceptible to ecosystem disturbances such as insects, diseases and large fires. An example of the latter was the Gallagher Peak Fire, which burned 37,230 acres in 1979.

Aspen forest acreage in this subsection has declined since the early twentieth century due to fire suppression. This is of concern since aspen provides important habitat for many wildlife species. It is also an important factor in the scenic beauty of the forest.

Centennial Mountains Subsection (M332Ea) / FMU 10 Centennials WFU

This subsection covers the Centennial Mountains between the east fork of Irving Creek on the west and Reas Pass to the east. The Centennials, which form part of the Continental Divide, are a scenic mountain range with high mountain meadows scattered among spruce/fir and Douglas-fir forests. At lower elevations sagebrush/grasslands grade into Douglas-fir and lodgepole pine forests. The recommended Lionhead Wilderness, in the northeast portion of the subsection, abuts existing and recommended wildernesses in Montana. The major travel corridors are Highways 20 and 87 and a portion of Interstate 15. The Yale-Kilgore road is a secondary travel route connecting Island Park to Kilgore and Dubois. In the northeast portion of the subsection is Henry's Lake, a world-renowned fishery. Segments of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, the Nez Perce National Historic Trail and the Two Top National Recreation Trail, lie within this subsection.

Sagebrush/grasslands and Douglas-fir communities, some of which have seen substantial timber management activities, dominate this subsection. Forested communities cover 71 percent of the subsection. Approximately 51 percent of the forested acres are Douglas-fir. Lodgepole pine (21 percent) is found in pockets on low productivity soils. Mixed lodgepole pine/Douglas-fir (13 percent) and other mixed conifers (10 percent) are also represented. Species such as Douglas-fir and subalpine fir are becoming established as stands move toward later seral stages through succession. Aspen comprises 4 percent of the acres, which is less than was historically present. Fire suppression has allowed conifers to take over areas that were previously rangeland, tall forb communities, and aspen. Conifers have also encroached into riparian areas.

Island Park Subsection (M331Aa) / FMU 8 Island Park Urban Interface, FMU 10 Centennials WFU

This subsection includes the west half of Island Park, Ashton, and the north dissected tablelands portion of the Teton Basin Ranger Districts (Jackpine Loop). The dominant landscape feature of this subsection is a large volcanic caldera. Highway 20 is the only major highway that travels through this subsection. Among the many scenic attractions are Upper and Lower Mesa Falls, the last major undisturbed falls on the Columbia River System. The Mesa falls Scenic Byway, established in 1989, provides motorists with an impressive view of the Teton Mountain Range and accesses a summer interpretive site along the two falls.

The Island Park Subsection offers excellent trout fishing at Island Park Reservoir and along the Henry's Fork, Buffalo River, Warm River, Fall River, and Bitch Creek. This subsection is also known nationally for its many snowmobile and cross-country ski trails. The significant influx of summer and year-round residents to private lands adjacent to forest in recent years is expected to continue. This urban-interface is a growing concern to the Forest. The area shows signs of large timber harvesting due to salvage efforts following the mountain pine beetle epidemics in the 1960's and 1970's. Harriman State Park lies within the heart of the Harriman Wildlife Refuge, with 16,000 acres of forest, meadows, lakes and streams.

The landscape is dominated by forested cover types, which blanket 93 percent of the area. Forested areas are primarily lodgepole pine types (70 percent) that contain small pockets of aspen, sagebrush/grass, grass meadows, and mountain brush. Douglas-fir (10 percent) and mixed lodgepole pine/Douglas-fir (15 percent) cover types provide some diversity in the area. Lodgepole pine occupies the floor of the Island Park Caldera and Douglas-fir cover types are concentrated on the caldera rim. On the caldera rim, aspen and sagebrush areas are being encroached upon by Douglas-fir as the process of succession continues.

Salvage harvest has shifted 35 percent of the forested acres into the non-stocked, seedling and sapling classes. Active management of aspen, as well as aspen sprouting in lodgepole pine clearcuts, have moved 34 percent of the aspen into these young classes. Other cover types are concentrated in the mature age group.

Madison-Pitchstone Plateaus Subsection (M331Ab) / FMU 10 Centennials WFU, FMU 11 C-T Wilderness WFU

The largest portion of the Madison Plateau subsection lies within Yellowstone National Park. This portion on the Forest is managed by the Ashton/Island Park District. The Ashton-Flagg Ranch Road and Fish Creek Road are the major access routes through the area. Grassy Lake, a 320-acre artificial lake, as well as other lakes and streams in the area, are popular fishing areas and are accessed by the Ashton-Flagg Ranch road. Several organized youth camps fall within this subsection. The Cave Falls road is the only motorized access to the southwest portion of Yellowstone Park. Segments of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail and the Two Top National Recreation (snowmobile) Trail lie within this subsection.

Forests comprise 97 percent of the area. Lodgepole pine is the most common forest cover type (76 percent), with mixed stands of lodgepole pine and Douglas-fir making up the remaining forested area (24 percent). Relatively minor amounts of aspen and various mixed conifers provide some diversity. The southern portion of the subsection is unique in that there are many wet meadows and small lakes intermingled with the forests.

The 1988 North Fork Fire scorched 17,700 acres in the northern part of this subsection, stimulating aspen suckering in numerous locations. This fire event and past timber harvesting primarily in the north half of the subsection have shifted 39 percent of the lodgepole pine into the nonstocked, seedling and sapling age classes. Active management of aspen has also provided some age class diversity. Due to fuel reductions and young age classes resulting from these disturbances, fire is less of a concern here than in many other areas. However, conditions in the southern portion of the Madison subsection are presenting some fire risks as aspen and lodgepole pine stands convert to Douglas-fir through succession. Mature subalpine fir and Douglas-fir in this southern area experienced outbreaks of western balsam bark beetle and Douglas-fir beetle in the past decade. These conditions have subsided, but could easily recur since vegetation conditions have not changed.

Currently 63 percent of the forests are in a mature or older age classes and provide suitable nesting sites for various bird species. Currently 23 percent of the forested acres are in non-stocked and seedling conditions, which provide foraging habitat.

The two designated wildernesses on the Forest lie wholly or partially within this subsection. The Jedediah Smith Wilderness (123,451 acres) is mostly in the Teton Range subsection with the balance in the Madison Plateau subsection. The Winegar Hole Wilderness (10,715 acres) is totally within the Madison Plateau subsection. Winegar Hole is largely primitive with very little use. This is mostly due to access difficulty, since there are only four miles of trail in the area. Use of this area is mostly for hunting big game. The Jedediah Smith is intensively used in the summer with approximately 74,000 visits (hiking, backpacking, and horseback riding). This is a spectacular mountainous area on the west slope of the famous Teton Mountain Range. These wildernesses are two of twelve designated in the Greater Yellowstone Area, which total 3.8 million acres. An area in this subsection in Idaho adjoining Wyoming's Winegar Hole Wilderness is recommended for wilderness designation.

Teton Range Subsection (M331Db) / FMU 10 Centennials WFU, FMU 11 C-T Wilderness WFU

This area encompasses the Teton Mountains, bounded on the north by South Boone Creek, on the south by Highway 22, on the west by the Teton Basin and on the east by Jackson Hole in Wyoming. The Teton Range is a spectacular line of high peaks rising abruptly along the east side of the Teton Basin. The landscape is a diverse mix of forested and open vegetation. The Jedediah Smith Wilderness traverses the upper portions of the west slopes of the Teton Mountains.

The Grand Targhee Ski and Summer Resort is a major tourist destination. Two permitted organized youth camps operate within the subsection. This area is known for its many backcountry trail systems, which are accessible by horse or foot.

The landscape is a diverse mix of forested (57 percent) and open (43 percent) community types. Forest tree species include Douglas-fir, lodgepole pine and mixed conifers. Lodgepole is mixed with Douglas-fir in 31 percent of the forested area, indicating that the pine is converting to Douglas-fir through succession. Open Douglas-fir forests, mountain brush, aspen and sagebrush pockets are found predominately on south and west aspects. Aspen is being encroached upon by conifers as succession proceeds, and the amount of aspen has declined compared with historic levels due to fire suppression. Upper elevations are characterized by dense mixed conifer forests, open grass/forb meadows, and talus slopes. Conifers are moving into riparian areas and mountain meadows due to fire suppression.

Since much of the Teton Range subsection is designated wilderness, timber harvest has been limited. Due to this fact and long-term fire suppression, only one percent of the forested acres are in the nonstocked, seedling or sapling age classes. The preponderance of mature and older forests (97 percent of total) makes this area suitable habitat for species such as marten and owls that prefer late-seral stage forests. Conversely the lack of fire has contributed to a decline in habitat for bighorn sheep and promoted susceptibility of the forested lands to insect infestations, diseases and large-scale fires. In recent years the western balsam bark beetle has been active in the subalpine fir. The Douglas-fir beetle has killed pockets of Douglas-fir in the past decade, but beetle populations have declined since 1992.

The Jedediah Smith Wilderness (123,451 acres) is mostly in the Teton Range subsection with the balance in the Madison-Pitchstone Plateaus subsection. The Jedediah Smith is intensively used yearlong with approximately 74,000 visits per year. Some of this use is shared with Grand Teton National Park, lying immediately to the east across the Teton Crest.

Teton Valley has been experiencing a development boom recently and urban interface is a growing concern for the Forest.

The subsection includes the Bechler-Teton Bear Management Unit. This area will experience little vegetation treatment in the near future while providing a high degree of security for grizzly bear. In addition to grizzly bears, peregrine falcon, bighorn sheep and many big game species inhabit the area.

Of critical importance to this subsection is the high amount of mature and over mature vegetation. To achieve the desired vegetation conditions for all of the management prescriptions will require careful fire management since little of this area will be available for silvicultural treatment.

Big Hole Mountains Subsection (M331Dk) / FMU 12 Caribou Mountains WFU

This subsection includes the National Forest System lands between Highway 33 in Idaho and highway 22 in Wyoming on the north and the South Fork of the Snake River to the south. Several major highways provide access. Vegetation consists of mountain brush, grass/forb openings, aspen, and forests of Douglas-fir and lodgepole pine. The area has a variety of recreational opportunities including Kelly Canyon Ski Resort, Kelly Canyon Nordic Ski Trails, Palisades's backcountry, and trail motorbike riding. Water sports enthusiasts use Palisades Reservoir and its many boat ramps. The Palisades Creek national Recreation Trail lies within this subsection.

Several utility corridors (electrical transmission lines) are located in this subsection. Most follow the highway system and are visible from the highway but do not dominate the landscape. Maintenance work and line upgrades can be seen along these highways. Additional power line needs have been identified and are expected in the near future within or next to these existing corridors.

The landscape is a mixture of vegetation community types. Some 65 percent of the landscape is forested. The most common forest type is mixed lodgepole pine and Douglas-fir, comprising 47 percent of the forested acres. Aspen, pure Douglas-fir and pure lodgepole pine each account for roughly 15 percent of the forest. Mountain mahogany is found on south slopes and Hawthorne, chokecherry, serviceberry, antelope bitterbrush and Rocky mountain maple on various slopes and aspects depending on elevation. Grass/forb meadows and sagebrush are also common.

Caribou Range Mountains Subsection (M331Di) / FMU 12 Caribou Mountains WFU

This subsection lies south of the South Fork of the Snake River. Steep mountain slopes and canyons dominate the landscape. The Palisades Reservoir is shared between this subsection and the Big Hole/ Palisades subsection. Vegetation forms a patchwork of sagebrush/grass openings, aspen, and mixed Douglas-fir/lodgepole pine forests. Recreation use is very similar to that in the Big Hole/Palisades subsection with high mountain trails, motorized use on trails, and backcountry use as well as hunting, fishing, and water sports on the reservoir and Snake River. There are several summer home divisions and two organizational camps. Forest's are visible from U.S. Highway 26, the major travel corridor between Idaho Falls, Idaho and Jackson, Wyoming. Very little logging has taken place in this subsection. Both cattle and sheep grazing occur.

This subsection is 60 percent forested. The primary forest types are aspen (31 percent) and mixed lodgepole and Douglas-fir (47 percent). The interspersed forests with sagebrush, grass/forb meadows and mountain brush provides for good diversity of plant species. The northeastern boundary area of the subsection includes cottonwood river bottom forests along the Snake River.

Most of the Shrublands are in late seral stages. Consequently, risks of large fires, insects and disease outbreaks are high.

The Role of Fire on the North End of the Targhee Portion of the C-T NF

Fire is natural and a vital ecosystem process (White and Pickett 1985) and is necessary for sustaining Forest ecosystems, which can all, in some way, be characterized as “fire-dependent” (Atkins *et al.* 1999). Fire serves many roles in the ecosystem including reducing biomass, recycling nutrients, regenerating vegetation, and maintaining diverse landscapes (Kozlowski and Ahlgren 1974, Parsons 1981). Fire has played a central role in the Forest’s ecosystems. The origin of Englemann spruce/subalpine fir, lodgepole pine, Douglas-fir, and most quaking aspen stands on the Forest can be traced to some form of disturbance. Historically, that disturbance was usually fire (Barrett 1994). Fire suppression in these communities can affect their susceptibility to insects and diseases and lead to changes in species composition, structure, and diversity (Atkins *et al.* 1999).

In the early 1900s, particularly after the dramatic wildfires of 1910 in northern Idaho and Montana, public concern for protection from forest fires brought about an era of aggressive fire suppression. The trend has continued to this day, with the effectiveness of suppression increasing greatly with the advent of aerial capabilities and improved road access in the years following World War II (Pyne 1982). Effective fire suppression has led to the overwhelming majority of the vegetation on the Targhee National Forest in mature age-classes as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Vegetation Type	Mature and Old Age-Classes
Quaking aspen	93%
Limber pine	100%
Douglas-fir	93%
Lodgepole pine	54%
Mixed Douglas-fir/Lodgepole pine	98%
Mixed Conifer	93%
Englemann spruce/Subalpine fir	93%
Whitebark pine	100%

Fire Occurrence on the North End of the Targhee Portion of the C-T NF

Historically, wildfire is the disturbance agent believed to have had the largest impact on the species composition and structure of the vegetation on the North Zone (Barrett 1994). Fire regimes on the North Zone are predominantly mixed-severity and lethal-severity regimes that periodically remove most or all of the existing vegetation from the sites affected. The acreage that historically burned on the North Zone is estimated to be approximately 14,150 acres, on average. Since southeastern Idaho was settled, however, most of the natural vegetation has been affected by livestock grazing and fire suppression. The Forest Service has had a policy of aggressively suppressing wildfires within the proclaimed boundary of the Forest. The following information is based on fire occurrence on the North Zone from 1970 to 2003.

Since 1970 there have been 316 lightning-caused wildfires and 324 human-caused wildfires that have burned approximately 74,449 acres on the North Zone. Two of the lightning fires (1 in 2002 and 1 in 2003) have been managed for Wildland Fire Use for a total of 25 acres. In 2004 1 lightning fire was managed as fire use for a total of 1.0 acres. The wildfires have ranged from 1/10 of an acre to approximately 17,691 acres before they were extinguished.

From 1970 to 2004 the annual acreage burned by wildfire (both lightning and human-caused) has been approximately 2,190 acres, on average. This number is large because of the North Fork Fire in 1988. In the past 33 years wildfires have burned approximately 15% of the North Zone that is estimated to have burned under historic conditions.

Since 1970, there have been approximately 69 prescribed fires on the North Zone that have been used to treat an estimated 30,552 acres. The purpose of the prescribed fires have been to improve wildlife habitat, to prepare sites for regenerating forests, to provide more herbaceous diversity and provide a more diverse mix of shrubland age-classes, to increase forage production, and to reduce hazardous fuels. Since 1970 the total acreage on the North Zone that has burned from all causes is approximately 105,000 acres.

As a result of fire suppression the amount of woody biomass has increased, both live vegetation and dead plant material. The North Zone has become more homogenous and less diverse (Barrett 1994), which has increased the risk of uncharacteristically large wildfires. If the trend of withholding fire, or some other form of disturbance, continues the risk of uncharacteristically large wildfires is expected to increase.

Role of Fire on the South End of the Targhee Portion of the C-T NF

Fire is natural and a vital ecosystem process (White and Pickett 1985) and is necessary for sustaining Forest ecosystems, which can all, in some way, be characterized as “fire-dependent” (Atkins *et al.* 1999). Fire serves many roles in the ecosystem including reducing biomass, recycling nutrients, regenerating vegetation, and maintaining diverse landscapes (Kozlowski and Ahlgren 1974, Parsons 1981). Fire has played a central role in the Forest’s ecosystems. The origin of Englemann spruce/subalpine fir, lodgepole pine, Douglas-fir, and most quaking aspen stands on the Forest can be traced to some form of disturbance. Historically, that disturbance was usually fire (Barrett 1994). Fire suppression in these communities can affect their susceptibility to insects and diseases and lead to changes in species composition, structure, and diversity (Atkins *et al.* 1999).

In the early 1900s, particularly after the dramatic wildfires of 1910 in northern Idaho and Montana, public concern for protection from forest fires brought about an era of aggressive fire suppression. The trend has continued to this day, with the effectiveness of suppression increasing greatly with the advent of aerial capabilities and improved road access in the years following World War II (Pyne 1982). Effective fire suppression has led to the overwhelming majority of the vegetation on the Targhee National Forest in mature age-classes as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Vegetation Type	Mature and Old Age-Classes
Quaking aspen	93%
Limber pine	100%
Douglas-fir	93%
Lodgepole pine	54%
Mixed Douglas-fir/Lodgepole pine	98%
Mixed Conifer	93%
Englemann spruce/Subalpine fir	93%
Whitebark pine	100%

Fire Occurrence on the South End of the Targhee Portion of the C-T NF.

Historically, wildfire is the disturbance agent believed to have had the largest impact on the species composition and structure of the vegetation on the South Zone (Barrett 1994). Fire regimes on the South Zone are predominantly mixed-severity and lethal-severity regimes that periodically remove most or all of the existing vegetation from the sites affected. The acreage that historically burned on the South Zone is estimated to be approximately 11,400 acres, on average. Since southeastern Idaho was settled, however, most of the natural vegetation has been affected by livestock grazing and fire suppression. The Forest Service has had a policy of aggressively suppressing wildfires within the proclaimed boundary of the Forest. The following information is based on fire occurrence on the South Zone from 1970 to 2003.

Since 1970 there have been 389 lightning-caused wildfires and 176 human-caused wildfires that have burned approximately 8,319 acres on the South Zone. Two of the lightning fires were managed for fire use in 2003 for a total of 2 acres. One of the Lightning fires was managed for fire use in 2004 for a total of 0.25 acres. The wildfires have ranged in size from 1/10th of an acre to approximately 2,550 acres before they were extinguished. From 1970 to 2004 the annual acreage burned by wildfire (both lightning and human-caused) on the Forest has been approximately 244 acres, on average. In the past 34 years wildfires have burned less than 5% of the area of the South Zone that is estimated to have burned under historic conditions.

Since 1970 there have been approximately 28 prescribed fires on the South Zone have been used to treat an estimated 13,997 acres. The purpose of the prescribed fires have been to improve wildlife habitat, to prepare sites for regenerating forests, to provide more herbaceous diversity and provide a more diverse mix of shrubland age-classes, to increase forage production, and to reduce hazardous fuels. Since 1970 the total acreage on the South Zone that has burned from all causes is approximately 22,316 acres.

As a result of fire suppression the amount of woody biomass has increased, both live vegetation and dead plant material. The South Zone has become more homogenous and less diverse (Barrett 1994), which has increased the risk of uncharacteristically large wildfires. If the trend of withholding fire, or some other form of disturbance, continues the risk of uncharacteristically large wildfires is expected to increase.

Current Fire Management Direction is for the appropriate management response. The decision to use a particular suppression tactic depends on many factors including threats to life, property, and investments; weather conditions; fuels; terrain; and the availability of firefighting personnel and equipment. The above subsections found on the Caribou portion of the C-T NF are divided into additional subunits. These subunits (prescriptions), which have fire and fuels emphasis, are listed below.

Designated Wilderness (1.1.6) (1.1.7)(1.1.8)

Natural and management ignited fires will be allowed to burn under predetermined prescriptive conditions as described in the Caribou-Targhee Wildland Fire Use Guidebook.

Wilderness Study Areas (1.2) Recommended Wilderness (1.3)

Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics will be employed to the maximum extent possible. Wildland fires and management ignited prescribed fire are allowed when they meet the objectives of the wilderness study area.

Special Management Areas (2.1.1)

Prescribed fire, both management ignited and wildland fire use may be used to maintain fire dependant characteristics of the area.

Eligible Wild River (2.3) Eligible Scenic River (2.4)

Employ the Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics to the maximum extent possible.

Eligible Recreation River (2.5)

All activity fuels will be treated to meet the partial retention VQO in foreground within one season following timber harvest.

Grizzly Bear Core Area (2.6.2)

No prescribed fire is allowed. In the event a wildland fire warrants suppression, only minimum impact suppression techniques will be followed.

Grizzly Bear Security Area (2.6.5)

Prescribed Fire is allowed to maintain or improve grizzly gear habitat.

Elk and Deer Winter Range (2.7 a-b)

Prescribed fire is allowed to maintain or improve winter habitat and enhance ecological conditions.

Aquatic Influence Zone (2.8.3) Dispersed Camping Management (4.3)

Avoid locating bases, camps, helibases, staging areas, helispots, hazardous material storage facilities, and other centers for incident management activities within these lands. If the only suitable location for such activities is within this area, an exception may be granted following a review and recommendation by a resource advisor. The resource advisor will prescribe the location, use conditions, and rehabilitation requirements. Avoid application of chemical retardant, foam, or additives in these areas. Exceptions may be warranted in situations where overriding safety concerns exist, or following a review and recommendation by a resource advisor, when an escape would cause more long-term damage. Prescribed fire activities on adjacent lands must be compatible with management prescription goals. Use minimum impact suppression methods.

Nonmotorized (3.1.1 a) (3.1.2) Semi Primitive Motorized (3.2 b, c, d, g, i)

The emphasis will be placed on wildland fire use whenever conditions permit. Employ minimum impact suppression tactics to the maximum extent possible. Use management ignited fire to maintain fire's ecological role and to enhance habitat.

Developed Recreation Sites (4.1) Special Use Permit Recreation Sites (4.2)

All wildfires that threaten these areas will be aggressively suppressed. Prescribed fire will generally not apply here. It may be used, however, to obtain natural regeneration in preference to soil disturbing techniques. Natural fuels will be reduced or otherwise treated so the potential fireline intensities will not exceed 100 BTU per second per foot on 90 percent of the days during the regular fire season (Burning Index < 40).

Timber Management (5.1 b, c, d) Forest Restoration (5.3 b)

During the fire season, all wildland fires will be suppressed using proper control strategies. Pre and post fire season strategies may include containment, confinement, or control. Utilize prescribed fire to reduce fuel loading; obtain natural regeneration; improve livestock forage conditions; for wildlife habitat improvement; and for other purposes that meet the needs of this prescription.

Visual Quality Improvement (5.2.1) Visual Quality Maintenance (5.2.2)

Wildfires will normally be suppressed using proper control strategies during the fire season. Pre- and post-fire season strategies may include containment, confinement, or control. Prescribed fire may be used to reduce fuel loading; obtain natural regeneration; improve livestock forage conditions; improve wildlife habitat; and for other purposes that meet the needs of this prescription.

Elk Summer Range (5.4 a, b, c)

Use prescribed fire to improve forage production, assist in forest regeneration and enhance ecological conditions.

Range Management (6.1 b)

Prescribed fire is allowed to achieve desired forage or ecological conditions.

Concentrated Development Areas (8.1)

All wildland fires will be aggressively suppressed.

Caribou Plan

FMZ 5: This zone includes the Montpelier and Soda Springs Ranger Districts. Management emphasis is on timber, minerals, wildlife and range. Fire Management direction is appropriate fire response with the option of wildland fire use. Currently the Caribou Range and Overthrust Mountains Subsection is in the C-T Fire Use Guidebook. The Webster Ridges and Mountains Subsection and Pruess Ridges and Hills Subsection will be added to the guidebook for implementation in fiscal year 2005. These two districts are split into the following Ecological Subsections found in the Caribou LRMP.

**Caribou Range and Over Thrust Mountains Subsection (M331Di) / FMU 12
Caribou Mountains WFU**

The Caribou, Black and Bald, and Little Elk Mountain ranges fall in this subsection.

The area consists of mountain ranges and valleys of Mesozoic and Cenozoic age sedimentary, intrusive and metamorphic rock, such as limestone, siltstone, conglomerate and sandstone, that have been modified by geomorphic processes. The geomorphic processes involve peneplain development with secondary fluvial processes confined in drainages and gravitational slope development in soft sediments. Gravitational transfer by landslides is associated with groundwater occurrences within the Wayan Formation. Elevations range from 5,600 to 9,800 feet. Slopes range from 5 to 60 percent. The major vegetation types include coniferous forest, grasslands, and shrublands. This map unit is separated from similar subsections by geology and climate.

Mean annual precipitation ranges from 28 inches on the lowest elevations to 40 inches on the highest elevations. Most precipitation occurs in the spring and winter with 60 % of the precipitation falling as snow. The mean annual air temperature is 29 to 38 degrees Fahrenheit.

Webster Ridges and Valleys Subsection (M331Dg) / FMU 12 Caribou Mountains WFU

The Webster Ridges and Valleys Subsection consists of the ridges and valleys formed from late Paleozoic to Mesozoic age sedimentary rocks, such as limestone, siltstone, conglomerate, sandstone and chert, which have been subjected to gravitational, fluvial and residual geomorphic processes. This subsection divides the Salt River and Blackfoot River Basins and drains into both. Elevation ranges from 6,100 to 9,957 feet. Slopes range from 15 to 60 percent. Vegetation types include coniferous forest and shrublands. This subsection is separated from others based on the presence of Phosphoric deposits; mountainous areas vegetated with conifers and sagebrush, and due to climatic factors.

Mean annual precipitation ranges from 24 inches at the lowest elevations to 40 inches at the highest elevations. Most precipitation occurs in the winter and spring seasons with 54 percent of the precipitation falling as snow. The mean annual air temperature is 29 to 38 degrees Fahrenheit.

Streams and rivers flow perennially in most valleys and canyons. The landscape is slightly to moderately dissected from major storm events causing fluvial action that created the dissected landscape. The natural disturbance processes are fire, insects, diseases, and windthrow. Human-caused disturbances include mining of phosphates, logging, road building, recreation activities and grazing.

Preuss Ridges and Hills Subsection (M331Df) FMU 12 Caribou Mountains WFU

The Preuss Ridges and Hills Subsection consists of ridges, rolling hills and short narrow valleys that have been modified by fluvial, gravitational transfer and residual processes. The types of rocks are limestone, siltstone, conglomerate, sandstone, and dolomite from the Mesozoic Era. Elevations range from 6,000 to 8,400 feet. Slopes range is 15 to 60 percent. The major vegetation types include coniferous forests and shrublands. This subsection is separated from similar subsections based on unstable mountain slopes and geologic materials that separate the surrounding valley subsections. Climatic and vegetative patterns are also differentiating criteria.

Mean annual precipitation ranges from 22 inches at the low elevations to 30 inches at the higher elevations. Most precipitation occurs in the spring and winter seasons falling as snow. The mean annual air temperature is 29 to 38 degrees Fahrenheit.

Valley bottoms and canyons typically have live streams or rivers running through them. The landscape is slightly to moderately dissect. Wetlands that occur in the Elk Valley Marsh area associated with wetland vegetation and depositional materials. This subsection has other wet areas. The natural disturbance processes are fire, insects and disease, flooding, windthrow, and gravitational transfer. Human-caused disturbances include roads, logging, grazing, and recreational activities.

Bear River Karst Highlands Subsection (M331Dd) / FMU 7 Soda Springs

The Bear River Highlands subsection consists of glaciated mountains, canyons, broad basins, meadows and foothills formed from Nounan limestone, Wasatch limestone, St. Charles limestone, Laketown dolomite, Hyrum dolomite and Brigham quartzite. Elevations range from 5,900 to 9,500 feet. Slopes range from 10 to 60 percent. Glaciations, periglaciations, karsts and fluvial processes have modified these landforms. Major vegetation types include coniferous forest and shrublands. This subsection is separate from others based on glaciated features and karst topography influenced by climatic and vegetative factors.

Mean annual precipitation ranges from 12 inches in the lower elevations to 40 inches at the high elevations. Most precipitation occurs in the fall and winter as snow. The mean annual air temperature is 34 to 39 degrees Fahrenheit.

Live streams typically occur in canyons with the Logan River flowing from Franklin Basin at the top of the range. The landscape is slightly to moderately dissect. The natural disturbance processes are fire, flooding, insects and disease, and windthrow. Fire occurred historically every 20 to 30 years. Human-caused disturbances include roads, grazing, logging, mining, human-caused fire and recreation.

Cache Valley Front Subsection (M331Dc) / FMU 7 Soda Springs

The Cache Valley Front Subsection encompasses the west face of the Bear River Mountain Range, which consists of very steep mountain faces. The mountains were formed from limestone, dolomite, sandstone, mudstone, tuffaceous sediments, and quartzite, that have been modified by karst solution processes, periglaciation, fluvial, colluvial and glaciations. Elevations range from 5,000 to 10,000 feet. Slopes range from 50 to 90 percent. Major vegetation types include coniferous forest and shrublands. This area is separated from similar subsections based upon karst topography, block faulting and climatic differences that support forest type vegetation.

Mean annual precipitation ranges from 12 inches at the low elevations to 40 inches at the high elevations. Elevation changes account for the large variation in precipitation. Most precipitation occurs in the spring and summer season with 60 percent of it falling as rain. The mean annual air temperature is 32 to 37 degrees Fahrenheit.

Streams typically occur in narrow canyons and valleys. The landscape is slightly dissected. The natural disturbance processes are fire, insect, disease and windthrow. Human-caused disturbances include logging, human-caused fires, grazing, recreational developments, powerlines and roads.

The Role of Fire on the Eastside of the Caribou Portion of the C-T NF (FMZ 5)

Fire is natural and a vital ecosystem process (White and Pickett 1985) and is necessary for sustaining Forest ecosystems, which can all, in some way, be characterized as “fire-dependent” (Atkins *et al.* 1999). Fire serves many roles in the ecosystem including reducing biomass, recycling nutrients, regenerating vegetation, and maintaining diverse landscapes (Kozlowski and Ahlgren 1974, Parsons 1981). Fire has played a central role in the Forest’s ecosystems. The origin of Englemann spruce/subalpine fir, lodgepole pine, Douglas-fir, and most quaking aspen stands on the Forest can be traced to some form of disturbance. Historically, that disturbance was usually fire (Barrett 1994). Fire suppression in these communities can affect their susceptibility to insects and diseases and lead to changes in species composition, structure, and diversity (Atkins *et al.* 1999).

In the early 1900s, particularly after the dramatic wildfires of 1910 in northern Idaho and Montana, public concern for protection from fires brought about an era of aggressive fire suppression. The trend has continued to this day, with the effectiveness of suppression increasing greatly with the advent of aerial capabilities and road access in the years after World War II (Pyne 1982). Effective fire suppression has led to the majority of the vegetation on the Caribou National Forest in mature age-classes as shown in Table 3.

Table 3.

Vegetation Type	Mature and Old Age-Classes
Sagebrush	50%
Utah juniper	80%
Rocky Mountain juniper	50%
Curlleaf mountain-mahogany	>70%
Limber pine	>60%
Douglas-fir	>60%
Quaking aspen	>60%
Lodgepole pine	>60%
Englemann spruce/Subalpine fir	>70%

Fire Occurrence on the Eastside of the Caribou Portion of the C-T NF (FMZ 5).

Historically, wildfire is the disturbance agent believed to have had the largest impact on the species composition and structure of the vegetation on the East Zone (Barrett 1994). Fire regimes on the East Zone are predominantly mixed-severity and lethal-severity regimes that periodically remove most or all of the existing vegetation from the sites affected. The annual acreage that historically burned on the East Zone is estimated to be approximately 13,630 acres, on average. Since southeastern Idaho was settled, however, most of the natural vegetation has been affected by livestock grazing and fire suppression. The Forest Service has had a policy of aggressively suppressing wildfires within the proclaimed boundary of the Forest. The following information is based on fire occurrence on the East Zone from 1970 to 2003.

Since 1970 there have been 231 lightning-caused wildfires and 157 human-caused wildfires that have burned approximately 13,226 acres on the East Zone. The wildfires have ranged in size from 1/10th of an acre to approximately 7,800 acres before they were extinguished. In 2004 the first fire use event was managed and it treated 4.0 acres. From 1970 to 2004 the annual acreage burned by wildfire (both lightning and human-caused) on the Forest has been approximately 389 acres, on average. In the past 34 years wildfires have burned less than 5% of the area of the East Zone that is estimated to have burned under historic conditions.

Since 1970 there have been 62 prescribed fires on the East Zone which have been used to treat approximately 15,390 acres. The purpose of the prescribed fires have been to improve wildlife habitat, to prepare sites for regenerating forests, to provide more herbaceous diversity and provide a more diverse mix of shrubland age-classes, to increase forage production, and to reduce hazardous fuels. Since 1970 the total acreage on the East Zone that has burned from all causes is approximately 28,616 acres. In the past 32 years fires from any source have burned approximately 5% to 10% of the area of the East Zone that is estimated to have burned under historic conditions.

As a result of fire suppression the amount of woody biomass has increased, both live vegetation and dead plant material. The East Zone has become more homogenous and less diverse (Barrett 1994), which has increased the risk of uncharacteristically large wildfires. If the trend of withholding fire, or some other form of disturbance, continues the risk of uncharacteristically large wildfires is expected to increase.

FMZ 6: Represents the Westside Ranger District. Management emphasis is for Wildlife, range, and recreation. Fire Management direction is appropriate management response with full suppression around urban interface and urban intermix and areas identified in the Caribou Land Management Plan. The District is split into the following subsections found in the Caribou LRMP.

Basin and Range Transitional Mountains Subsection (M331Du) / FMU 5 Pocatello Urban Interface and FMU 6 Malad

The Basin and Range Transitional Mountains subsection consists of the Bannock and Malad Mountain Ranges of Paleozoic aged sedimentary and volcanic rock, such as limestone, dolomite, siltstone, conglomerate, sandstone, and volcanic materials, that have been modified by fluvial, colluvial and residual geomorphic processes. Elevations range from 5,000 to 9,095 feet (1,524 to 1,091 meters). Slopes range from 30 to 70 percent. The major vegetation types include coniferous forest and shrublands. This map unit is separated from similar subsections based upon the transitional characteristics of the Basin and Range geomorphic features. Climate is more moist and cooler than surrounding subsections.

Mean annual precipitation ranges from 18 inches (46 cm) at the lowest elevations to 30 inches (76 cm) at the highest elevations. Most precipitation occurs in the winter and spring with most of the precipitation falling as snow. The mean annual air temperature is 29 to 38 degrees F (-1.7 to 3.3 degrees C).

Live streams typically occur in the major drainages and canyons. The landscape is slightly to moderately dissected. The natural disturbance processes are fire, insects, disease, windthrow and some flooding in the drainages. Some gully erosion has occurred in the lower foothill draws and drainages. Human-caused disturbances include roads, logging, mining and grazing. Mining of perlite and pumice occurs near Wright Creek.

Portneuf Uplands Subsection (M331Db) / FMU 5 Pocatello Urban Interface

The Portneuf Upland Subsection consists of high mountains with narrow valleys and steep foothills formed from limestone, dolomite, chert, sandstone, mudstone, siltstone and quartzite that have been modified by pluvial, colluvial and fluvial geomorphic processes with some gravitational transfer. Major vegetation types include coniferous forest and shrublands. Elevations range from 4,500 to 9,271 feet (1,370 to 2,825 meters) with slopes of 30 to 70 percent. This subsection is separated from similar subsections based upon mountains and ranges that represent features similar to the Basin and Range geomorphology and forest vegetation types. Wetter and colder climate influences on the mountainous geomorphology are the differentiating criteria.

Mean annual precipitation ranges from 18 inches (46 cms) in the lowest elevations to 35 inches (89 cms) at the tops of the mountains. Differences are due to elevation differences and rain shadow effect. Most precipitation occurs in the winter months with about half of the precipitation falling as snow. The mean annual air temperature is 37 to 45 degrees F (2.8-7.2 degrees C).

Live streams typically occur in the narrow valleys. The landscape is moderately dissected. Isolated areas of wetlands occur in the valleys along streams associated with alluvial deposits. The natural disturbance processes are fire, insects, disease, flooding in drainages, windthrow and mass failures. Human-caused disturbances include roads, timber harvest, prescribed fire, recreation and grazing.

The Role of Fire on the Westside of the Caribou Portion of the C-T NF (FMZ 6)

Fire is natural and a vital ecosystem process (White and Pickett, 1985) and is necessary for sustaining Forest ecosystems, which can all, in some way, be characterized as “fire-dependent” (Atkins *et al.* 1999). Fire serves many roles in the ecosystem including reducing biomass, recycling nutrients, regenerating vegetation, and maintaining diverse landscapes (Kozlowski and Ahlgren 1974, Parsons 1981). Fire has played a central role in the Forest’s ecosystems. The origin of Englemann spruce/subalpine fir, lodgepole pine, Douglas-fir, and most quaking aspen stands on the Forest can be traced to some form of disturbance. Historically, that disturbance was usually fire (Barrett 1994). Fire suppression in these communities can affect their susceptibility to insects and diseases and lead to changes in species composition, structure, and diversity (Atkins *et al.* 1999).

In the early 1900s, particularly after the dramatic wildfires of 1910 in northern Idaho and Montana, public concern for protection from forest fires brought about an era of aggressive fire suppression.

The trend has continued to this day, with the effectiveness of suppression increasing greatly with the advent of aerial capabilities and improved road access in the years following World War II (Pyne 1982). Effective fire suppression has led to the overwhelming majority of the vegetation on the Caribou National Forest in mature age-classes as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Vegetation Type	Mature and Old Age-Classes
Sagebrush	50%
Utah juniper	80%
Rocky Mountain juniper	50%
Curlleaf mountain-mahogany	>70%
Limber pine	>60%
Douglas-fir	>60%
Quaking aspen	>60%
Lodgepole pine	>60%
Englemann spruce/Subalpine fir	>70%

Fire Occurrence on the Westside of the Caribou Portion of the C-T NF (FMZ 6).

Historically, wildfire is the disturbance agent believed to have had the largest impact on the species composition and structure of the vegetation on the West Zone (Barrett 1994). Fire regimes on the West Zone are predominantly mixed-severity and lethal-severity regimes that periodically remove most or all of the existing vegetation from the sites affected. The annual acreage that historically burned on the West Zone is estimated to be approximately 5,770 acres, on average. Since southeastern Idaho was settled, however, most of the natural vegetation has been by affected by livestock grazing and fire suppression. The Forest Service has had a policy of aggressively suppressing wildfires within the proclaimed boundary of the Forest. The following information is based on fire occurrence on the West Zone from 1970 to 2003.

Since 1970 there have been 250 lightning-caused wildfires and 98 human-caused wildfires that have burned approximately 25,763 acres on the West Zone. The wildfires have ranged in size from 1/10th of an acre to approximately 3,070 acres before they were extinguished. From 1970 to 2004 the annual acreage burned by wildfire (both lightning and human-caused) on the Forest has been approximately 758 acres, on average. In the past 34 years wildfires have burned less than 5% of the area of the West Zone that is estimated to have burned under historic conditions.

Since 1970 there have been 52 prescribed fires on the West Zone which have been used to treat approximately 24,456 acres. The purpose of the prescribed fires have been to improve wildlife habitat, to prepare sites for regenerating forests, to provide more herbaceous diversity and provide a more diverse mix of shrubland age-classes, to increase forage production, and to reduce hazardous fuels. Since 1970 the total acreage on the West Zone that has burned from all causes is approximately 50,219 acres. In the past 34 years fires from any source have burned approximately 25% to 30% of the area of the West Zone that is estimated to have burned under historic conditions.

As a result of fire suppression the amount of woody biomass has increased, both live vegetation and dead plant material. The West Zone has become more homogenous and less diverse (Barrett 1994), which has increased the risk of uncharacteristically large wildfires. If the trend of withholding fire, or some other form of disturbance, continues the risk of uncharacteristically large wildfires is expected to increase.

Current Fire Management Direction is for the appropriate management response. The decision to use a particular suppression tactic depends on many factors including threats to life, property, and investments; weather conditions; fuels; terrain; and the availability of firefighting personnel and equipment. The above subsections found on the Caribou portion of the C-T NF are divided into additional subunits. These subunits (prescriptions), which have a fire and fuels emphasis are listed below.

Recommended Wilderness (1.3)

Fire and fuels management guidelines include the use of Minimum Impact Management Tactics (MIMT) to the maximum extent possible. Also allow management ignited prescribed fire and wildland fire use when they meet the goals of the Recommended Wilderness.

Special Management Areas (2.1.1)

Management ignited prescribed fire and wildland fire use may be used to maintain fire-dependant characteristics of the area.

Municipal Watersheds (2.1.3)

The guidelines for this area is to aggressively suppress all wildfires and to utilize management ignited prescribed fire to maintain fire dependant characteristics.

Research Natural Areas (RNA's) (2.2)

The fire and fuels standard for this subunit is to document in Scientific Research the ecological role of fire to maintain specific communities from which the RNA was established. The guideline is to utilize management ignited prescribed fire and wildland fire use to reintroduce disturbance processes consistent with the goals of the RNA.

Wild and Scenic Eligible Recreation Rivers (2.5)

All activity fuels within this area will be treated to meet the Visual Quality Objectives within one season following treatment.

Elk and Deer Winter Range and Forage (2.7.1 a, b, e, 2.7.2 a, b,)

Prescribed fire is allowed to maintain and improve winter habitat and enhance ecological conditions.

Aquatic Influence (2.8.3)

Avoid mixing or applying chemical retardant, foam, or additives in Aquatic Influence Zones. Also manage wood residue (natural and human-made), including fuel wood, to maintain or restore ecological health and function.

Nonmotorized (3.1 b) and Semi-Primitive motorized (3.2 a-d)

Allow wildland fire use whenever conditions permit. If suppression is the appropriate management response use minimum impact tactics and management actions.

Semi-Primitive Restoration (3.3 b)

Allow natural disturbances to play their natural role in ecological succession. Allow prescribed fire and mechanical treatments (timber harvest and thinning) and other tools to achieve restoration goals.

Developed Recreation Sites (4.1) Special Use Permit Recreation Sites (4.2)

All wildfires, which threaten these areas will be aggressively suppressed.

Dispersed Camping (4.3)

Use minimum impact suppression tactics on wildfires threatening these sites.

Timber Management (5.1 b, c, d) Forest Restoration (5.3 b)

During the fire season, all wildland fires will be suppressed using control strategies. Pre and post fire season strategies may include containment, confinement, or control. Utilize prescribed fire to reduce fuel loading; obtain natural regeneration; improve livestock forage conditions; for wildlife habitat improvement; and for other purposes that meet the needs of this prescription.

Big Game Summer Habitat (5.4)

Use prescribed fire to improve forage production, assist in forest regeneration, and enhance ecological conditions. Wildfires will be suppressed using control strategies during the fire season. Pre- and post fire season strategies may include containment, confinement, or control.

Rangeland Livestock Forage (6.1 b, d) Rangeland Restoration (6.3 b, c, e, f)

Management ignited prescribed fire and wildland fire use is allowed to achieve desired forage or ecological conditions.

Concentrated Developed Areas (8.1)

All wildland fires will be aggressively suppressed.

Curlew Grasslands Plan

FMZ 7: This zone includes the Curlew Grasslands found within the boundaries of the Malad District on the Caribou portion of the C-T NF. The area has its own LRMP. Fire management direction is appropriate management response utilizing full suppression.

Humboldt River High Plateau Subsection (342Ba) / FMU 6 Malad

This subsection includes the Basin and Range physiographic areas of northeastern Nevada, northwestern Utah and southern Idaho. Potential natural vegetation is generally a mixture of sagebrush steppe, basin big sagebrush and mountain brush communities.

The highest elevations (not within the Curlew National Grasslands) in this subsection have Douglas-fir plant communities on north aspects. Dryland and irrigated agricultural practices have removed sagebrush and mountain brush cover in some areas of this subsection. Geology consists of Paleozoic marine sediments, rhyolitic flows and shallow intrusive rocks.

Approximately 33,093 acres of land within the 75,000 acre Curlew National Grasslands boundary are within this subsection. Land falls under Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service, State and Private management.

The mountain and valleys have an elevation range of 5,135 to 7,500 feet. Slopes range from 5 to 60 percent. Mean annual precipitation ranges from 8 to 25 inches. Natural disturbances consist of fire, flooding, insects and disease. The fire return interval is 20 to 40 years on the mountain big sagebrush cover types and 40 to 80 years for Wyoming big sagebrush types. Human-caused disturbances include grazing, agriculture, human-caused fire and some mining.

Curlew Valley Lake Sediments Subsection (342Bb) / FMU 6 Malad

This subsection includes valleys of the Northern Basin and Range sections that have been influenced by ancient Lake Bonneville. These valleys were formed from alluvium derived from the surrounding mountain ranges and sediments from Lake Bonneville in the portions of the subsection that extends from Utah into southern Idaho. Potential natural vegetation consists of basin big sagebrush, sagebrush steppe and salt desert shrub. Geology consists of Quaternary detritus and Pleistocene glacial-lake and shoreline deposits.

The size of this subsection is approximately 41,723 acres. Land falls under Federal Government (Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service) State, and Private management. The valleys have an elevation range of 4,500 to 6,000 feet. Slopes range from 0-25 percent. Mean annual precipitation ranges from 5 to 18 inches. Natural disturbances consist of fire, flooding and insect and disease. The fire return interval is 20 to 40 years on sagebrush cover types. Human-caused disturbances include grazing, agriculture, human-caused fire and some gravel pit mining.

Current fire management direction is for the appropriate management response. The decision to use a particular suppression tactic depends on many factors including threats to life, property, and investments; weather conditions; fuels; terrain; and the availability of firefighting personnel and equipment.

The Curlew National Grasslands are divided into 5 subunits, which have specific management direction. These subunits found in the Curlew LRMP consist of:

Riparian / Wetlands Areas (RWA's) (2.8.8)

Fire and fuels standards within this subunit include prescribed fire and vegetation treatment of lands adjacent to RWA's must be compatible with management prescription goals. Fire retardants will not be used within RWA's.

The guideline is to avoid base camps, staging areas, hazardous material storage facilities, or other centers for incident management activities within this area. Exceptions may be granted on an individual basis following a review and recommendation by a resource advisor. The resource advisor will prescribe the location, use conditions and rehabilitation requirements.

Rangeland Vegetation and Upland Game Bird Habitat (6.5)

The guideline for this area is to use prescribed fire to achieve desired ecological conditions or resource objectives.

Developed Recreation Sites (4.1.2)

Prescribed fire is generally not utilized; however it may be used to obtain more properly functioning conditions in preference to soil-disturbing techniques. Natural fuels will be reduced or otherwise treated so the potential fireline intensities will not exceed 100 BTU per second per foot on 90 percent of the days during the regular fire season (Burning index <40).

IV. WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM COMPONENTS

A. General Implementation Procedures

The following sub-sections discuss all aspects of a suppression program, ranging from preparedness actions through rehabilitation of wildland fires.

Wildland fire mobilization and operational procedures will be established to identify responses to situations resulting from suppression fires and wildland fire use.

All unwanted wildland fires would be suppressed using the most appropriate management response. The intent of this direction is to enhance safety while preventing loss of structures and property. The top priority during the selection of suppression action will be safety of firefighting personnel and the public, including adjacent landowners.

A natural ignited fire will always be either a suppression fire or managed as a wildland fire use event. A candidate fire located within a wildland fire use FMU may be considered a wildland fire use event. If a wildland fire use event exceeds prescription and cannot be brought back into prescription within a reasonable amount of time (48 hours) it becomes a suppression fire. If this occurs it may not be converted back to wildland fire use status.

1. Implementation Procedures

A WFIP will be initiated for all wildland fires. The WFIP Stage I, Initial Fire Assessment provides the decision framework for selection of full suppression, appropriate management response or wildland fire use. The Assessment will include initial fire size up, decision criteria check list, wildland fire relative risk assessment, and criteria derived from the C-T NF LRMP's, which will lead to the initial decision as to whether the fire will be suppressed or managed as a wildland fire use event.

Where the Fire Management Unit (FMU) only considers suppression as the only appropriate response, the requirement for a decision checklist as part of the Stage I analysis is considered to be met. Subsequently the Stage I Analysis may be satisfied at the programmatic level of the LRMP. The Unit Duty Officer will determine and complete the WFIP Stage I process determining the initial appropriate management response.

All wildland fires with the potential to be managed, as fire use events will be assessed and a determination will be made whether to manage these fires as fire use events or as suppression fires. Wildland fire use events will have a Wildland Fire Implementation Plan (WFIP) developed. The complexity of the fire will determine which stage the development of the WFIP stops. All wildland fire use events will undergo validation, appropriate to the complexity of the fire. Only complex wildland fire use events require completion of all stages of a WFIP (Stages I-III). At national preparedness levels of 1, 2, and 3 the authority to approve wildland fire use is at the Forest level. At national preparedness levels of 4 and 5 the C-T NF will get regional approval whom in turn gets national confirmation before making the initial call of go/no go.

A Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) will be prepared to document the selection of a new strategy for all unwanted wildland fires for which the initial selected suppression response has failed or is likely to fail under forecasted conditions. The WFSA will also be prepared to identify the appropriate suppression response for all wildland fire use events and prescribed fires that exceed prescription. Specific requirements are identified in Chapter 4 of the Wildland and Prescribed Fire Management Policy Implementation Guide.

B. Wildland Fire Suppression

1. Range of Potential Fire Behavior

There is a wide variation in fire behavior on the C-T NF. It ranges from smoldering to intense fast moving, depending on such factors as fuels, weather and topography. The C-T NF fuel types range from grass fuel models to heavy slash fuel models, and elevations from lows of 4,500 to highs above 10,000 feet.

Average fires can be expected to have a rate of spread of 1 to 6 chains per hour. However, under different conditions, these same fuels can support a sustained crown fire that can move through the canopy at speeds of up to 5 miles per hour. In the lower elevation grass shrub types found on the Caribou side of the forest these speeds can be much greater.

Variation in fire behavior can be expected to change as quickly as the interaction between the fuels, topography and weather. Concurrently, anticipating changes in fire behavior directly effects the selection of particular strategies and tactics to safely manage a wildland fire on the C-T NF.

2. Preparedness Actions

a. Fire Prevention Program, Community Education, Community Risk Assessment, and Other Community Assistance Activities.

Annual Prevention Program

District Fire Management and the Forest Prevention Specialist accomplish fire prevention activities on the C-T NF. A typical range of programs are undertaken including signing, press releases and public service announcements, educational programs targeting school children and forest visitors and coordination with local cooperators during periods of high fire danger.

The Forest participates in the Smokey Bear Program to maintain awareness of the need to prevent wildfires. Smokey Bear related fire prevention materials are distributed by agency officials as well as through educational programs that focus on local school children. Forest employees dressed as Smokey Bear participate in local festivals and parades throughout the Forest.

Contacts with Forest visitors at office locations across the Forest provide information regarding current fire danger and tips for camping and backcountry use. Recreation staff including wilderness rangers and personnel staffing developed recreation sites make frequent one on one contact with forest users. Other contacts are made through radio, television, newspapers, and signing. Press releases, informal contacts, and feature articles are also used to get the message to the public.

The forest employees and zone fire management officers routinely coordinate fire prevention activities with Federal, State and local cooperators and communities. An example of one such program is staffing a fire prevention booth at Eastern Idaho State Fair.

Some individual Districts have fire prevention plans. The C-T has a forest wide fire prevention plan, which can be found at the EIIFC. These plans include location of prevention signs, statistics on human caused fires, involvement in special events etc..

Pre-attack planning is complete and is available at EIIFC. These actions are in compliance with LRMP direction.

Special Orders and Closures

The Regional Forester and the Forest Supervisor have authority to issue restrictions and closures of National Forest Lands. The District Rangers, who are responsible for implementation and enforcement of the restrictions, will be contacted to ensure that proposed restrictions are coordinated across the Unit as appropriate.

The C-T NF Fire Management Specialist (Prevention, Mitigation and Fire Use) is responsible for coordination of fire restrictions with local cooperators to develop and to make understood the effects on visitors to the local area. The purpose of the restrictions and closures is to reduce the risk of human-caused fire during periods of extended high fire danger.

Stages of Restrictions

Restrictions and closures are triggered and implemented in accordance with the Southern Idaho Fire Restrictions and Closure Procedures Plan. Restrictions are enacted if pre identified thresholds in this plan are reached and conditions well exceed the normal fire season conditions. There are two stages of restrictions.

Stage I. The following acts are prohibited under stage 1 restrictions.

1. Building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire or campfire except within a developed recreation site, and only within an owner provided fire structure.
2. Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials.

EXEMPTIONS:

1. Persons with a written permit that specifically authorizes the otherwise prohibited act.
2. Persons using a fire solely fueled by liquid petroleum or LPG fuels.
3. Persons conducting activities in those designated areas where the activity is specifically authorized by written posted notice.
4. Any Federal, State, or local officer or members of an organized rescue or firefighting force in the performance of an official duty.
5. Other exemptions unique to each agency.

Stage II. The following acts are prohibited under stage 2 restrictions.

1. Building, maintaining, attending or using a campfire.
2. Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials
3. Operating motorized vehicles off designated roads and trails.
4. The following acts are prohibited 1:00 pm to 1:00 am.:
 - a. Operating a chainsaw or other equipment powered by an internal combustion engine for felling, bucking, skidding, road building and woodcutting during industrial operations or firewood gathering.
 - b. Blasting, welding, or other activities that generate flame or flammable material. A patrol is required for one hour following cessation of all as described in “a” and “b”.

EXEMPTIONS:

6. Persons with a written permit that specifically authorizes the otherwise prohibited act.
7. Persons using a fire solely fueled by liquid petroleum or LPG fuels.
8. Persons conducting activities in those designated areas where the activity is specifically authorized by written posted notice.
9. Any Federal, State, or local officer or members of an organized rescue or firefighting force in the performance of an official duty.
10. Other exemptions unique to each agency.

Closure guidelines

Before the fire season, Geographic Agency Administrators within the Southern Idaho Zone of the Eastern Great Basin Geographic Area should review the evaluation guidelines and reaffirm the threshold levels that would substantiate the need for closures.

Examples Include:

- Potential loss of life due to explosive fire conditions.
- Potential for extreme or blowup fire behavior.
- Stage II Restrictions are not effective in reducing the number of human caused fires.
- Resources across the geographic area are at a critical shortage level.

Procedures for Implementation of Restrictions and Closures can be found in “Southern Idaho Fire Restrictions and Closure Procedures” which is updated on a yearly basis.

b. Annual Fire Training Activities

All agency personnel having wildland fire qualifications are required to attend an annual 8 hour fire refresher. This refresher includes fire shelter deployment and recurrent safety topics such as Standards for Survival; Look Up, Look Down, Look Around; or similar safety orientation training. Attendance at refresher training along with successful completion of the appropriate level of work capacity testing is a pre-requisite for receipt of a red card prior to June 15th.

All employees with support roles in fire suppression in a camp setting including drivers, resource specialists, and line officers need to attend annual fire refresher training.

The Six Minutes for Safety program is incorporated on a daily basis for all fire management staff members at the zone level. These sessions combined with the daily briefing are recorded and documented.

Basic Firefighter training (S-130, S-190) is offered annually to new employees and interested members of local cooperating agencies and fire departments.

The Forest Red Card committee meets annually to review wildfire and prescribed fire qualifications for all agency personnel. The core committee is made up of individuals identified in FSH 5109.17. This committee reviews the list of personnel qualified by position to undertake assignments in support of wildfire or prescribed fire and identifies positions where insufficient personnel are qualified to meet short term needs by functional area. All Red Card qualifications will conform to the Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualification System Guide, (PMS 310-1) and Forest Service directives found in FSH 5109.17. [Appendix D \(Qualifications\)](#)

During the winter of 2004, C-T has also developed a “Fire and Aviation Training and Qualifications Program” The administration guide for this program can be found in [Appendix D](#).

c. Fire Season Readiness

Annual Preparedness Reviews

Zone preparedness resources will undergo a readiness review by agency/interagency fire management specialists prior to June 15th annually. Readiness reviews may include Dispatch Center, Helitack and staff management functions at the discretion of the Unit FMO and review team.

Season Start Up Criteria with Typical Dates

The fire season start and stop dates represent the period of time during which approximately 90% of the fires will occur. The normal fire season stop and start dates for the Caribou -Targhee National Forest are June 24th and October 18th respectively. These dates are used as guidance for staffing initial attack resources on the forest, and often we are requested to provide resources for areas in the Southwestern U.S.. However, it must be noted that fires can occur any time of the year and it is possible for large fires to happen outside of the established fire season. In these instances, permanent employees and local cooperator units will be used to suppress fires or to manage wildland fire use events.

Forest Cache Considerations

The forest will maintain Type III fire caches on each zone. Zone fire caches are located at Dubois, Island Park, Ashton, Driggs, Swan Valley, Pocatello, Malad, Soda Springs, and Montpelier. Zone FMOs are responsible to ensure appropriate stocking levels of fire caches and to provide for receiving and distribution functions as appropriate. Headquarters at Idaho Falls maintains a 200-person fire cache shared between the BLM and FS.

d. Detection

Zone Fire Management Officers may request aerial detection services on an as-needed basis from East Idaho Interagency Fire Center. The contract air attack platform and available smoke jumper aircraft can undertake aerial detection missions subject to their availability.

e. Fire Weather and Fire Danger

Fire danger for the C-T NF is calculated from a network of Remote Area Weather Stations (RAWS) including stations owned by the forest and other stations owned by the Upper Snake River District BLM. There are currently 16 RAWS stations in the Eastern Idaho network. The forest has 9 weather stations, 8 of which are RAWS stations and 1 is a manual weather station (a portable RAWS station), and the BLM has 7 weather stations all of which are RAWS stations. Additionally, the US Fish and Wildlife Service has 1 RAWS station on the Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge.

The National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) RAWS Depot performs BLM weather station maintenance annually. The RAWS Depot is also responsible for any needed repairs during the fire season for these stations. Annual maintenance and repairs (completed by June 30th) on forest stations is the responsibility of the FFM.

Weather station data is managed by the Eastern Idaho Interagency Fire Dispatch Center through the use of the Weather Information System (WIMS). The dispatch center is responsible for managing the weather station information and utilizes the WIMS program to calculate fire danger indices daily during the fire season.

Weather station catalogs are generally “pre-greened” around April 1 of each year and fire danger indices are calculated daily. Station catalogs are then greened up as conditions warrant which typically occurs around the first week of May then are put into transition, cured and finally frozen as the season progresses. Daily fire danger indices are calculated every day from April 1 through October 31 of each year and may be extended later into the year until a season ending event occurs.

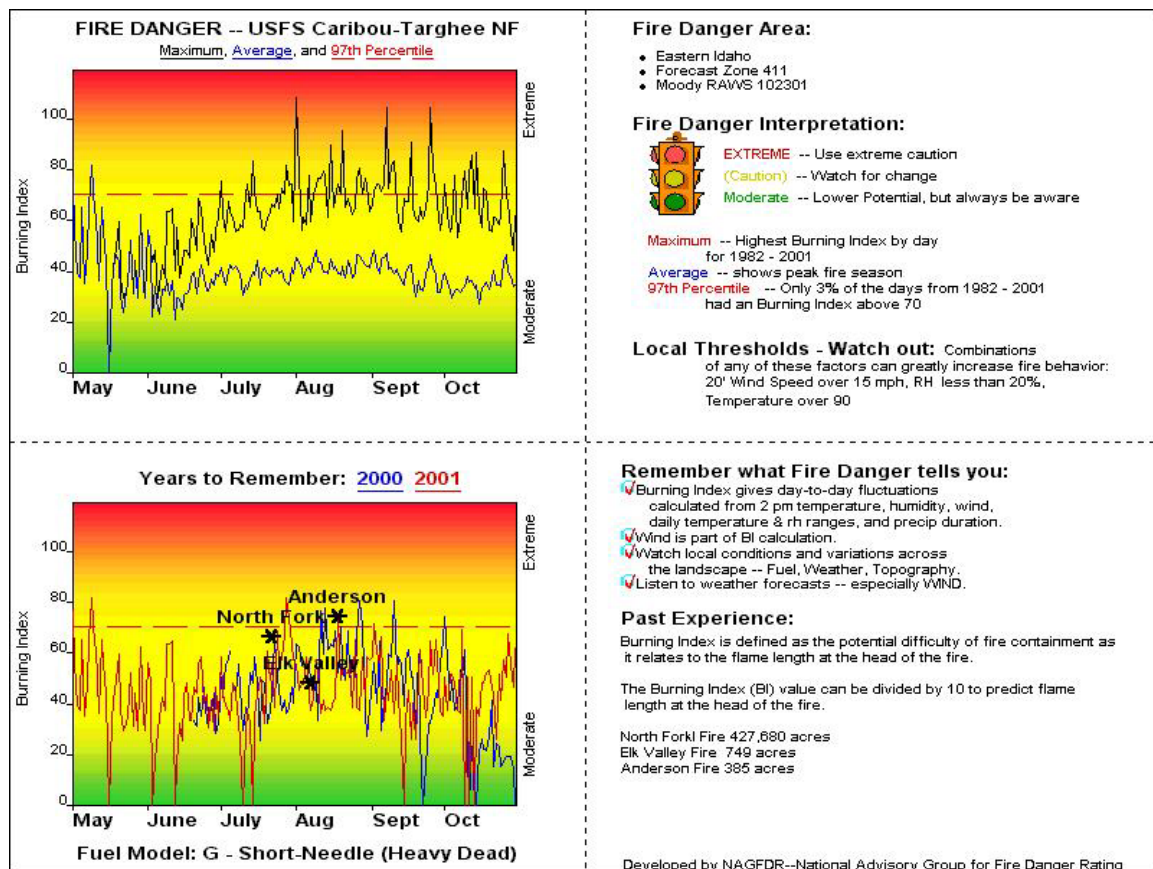
The Eastern Idaho Interagency Fire Center Dispatch Center utilizes a pre-dispatch plan (found at EIIFC) which is largely based on the National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS) with a key component being daily calculated staffing level. When a new fire is reported, the dispatch center locates the nearest weather station to the fire, references the staffing level for that weather station and dispatches the response called for in the pre-dispatch plan utilizing the closest forces.

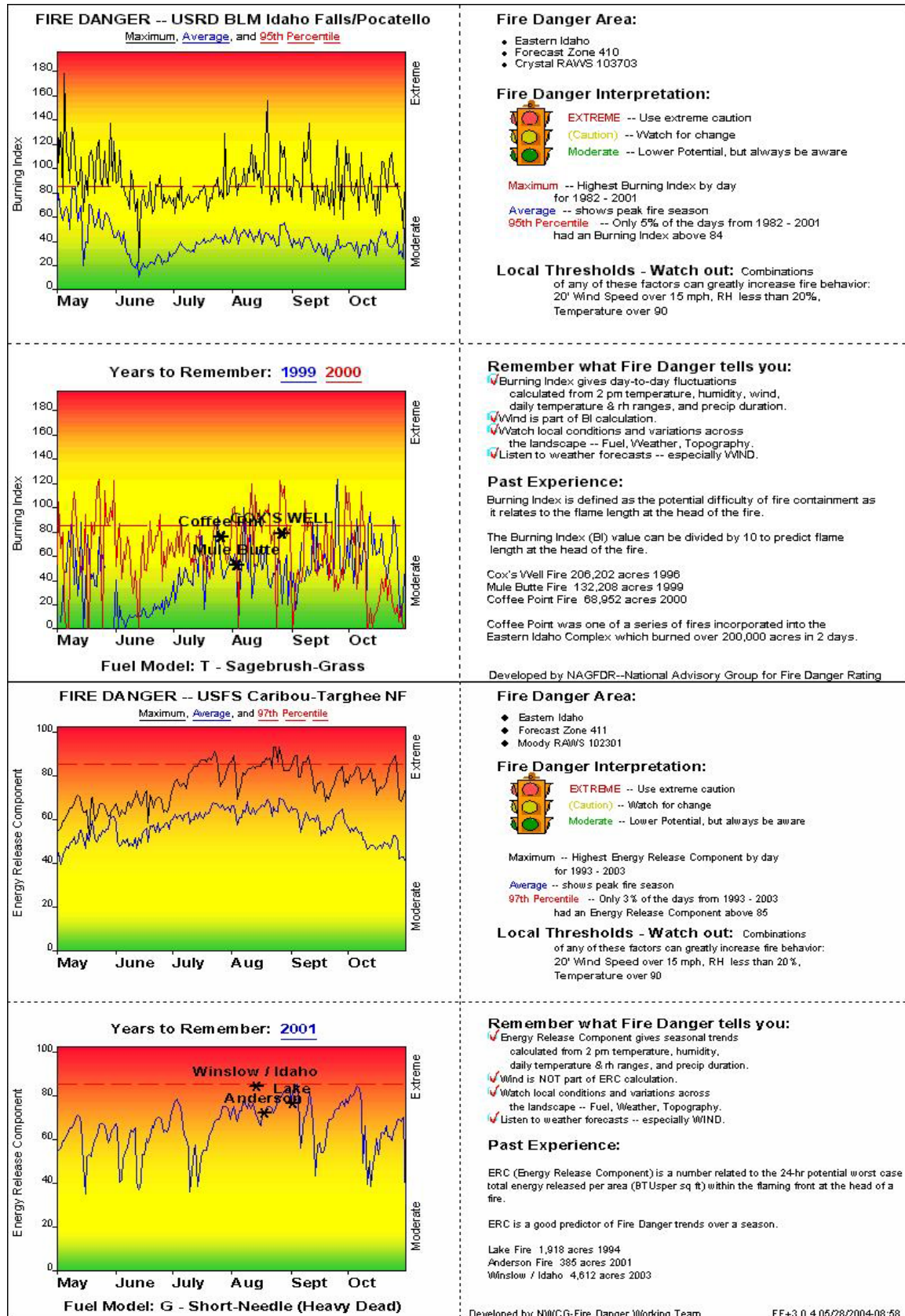
Historical fire weather data is captured from KCFAST and archived in the FireFamily Plus computer program for use in analysis by forest and BLM fire personnel for fire suppression, fuels management, fire use, fire prevention, NFMAS analysis and for documenting reasons for severity funding as conditions warrant.

Energy Release Component (ERC) is the index most often utilized for seasonal trend analysis. Agency specific NFDRS thresholds are utilized when conducting analysis. These thresholds are 80th and 95th percentiles for BLM and 90th and 97th percentiles for the USFS stations.

The forest utilizes 2 fire danger pocket cards for Eastern Idaho. One of these cards models NFDRS fuel model G and is generated from the Caribou-Targhee NF (Moody) RAWS station. The second fire danger pocket card is for NFDRS fuel model T and is generated from the BLM (Crystal) RAWS station. Burning Index (BI) and Energy Release Component (ERC) are the NFDRS index utilized for these cards. The dispatch center communicates the daily forecasted BI to field units daily over the radio along with the morning fire weather forecast. The actual calculated BI is broadcast over the radio in the afternoon along with the afternoon fire weather forecast.

All fire personnel from both the Caribou-Targhee National Forest and the Upper Snake River District BLM, and any incoming crews or engines are provided with both fire danger pocket cards and all of the districts and engine stations have been provided with enlarged copies of the pocket cards so that the fire personnel can plot daily Burning Indexes and Energy Release Components as part of their morning briefing.





Historical Energy Release Component Graphs for RAWS Stations in Eastern Idaho with maximum, minimum and average values and agency specific NFDRS thresholds [Appendix E \(ERC Graphs\)](#). Below are the stations in tabular form.

Station Name	Station Number	Station Area	Fuel Model	ERC 80 th %	ERC 90 th %	ERC 95 th %	ERC 97 th %	Agency
Arco	101905	Arco	T A	18 2		21 3		BLM
Mulkay Bar	101906	Little Lost Basin	T	18		21		BLM
Gas Caves	102106	St. Anthony	T A	14 2		19 3		BLM
Crystal	103703	Aberdeen	T	16		20		BLM
Grace	103902	Grace	T H	17 41		21 50		BLM
Pole Canyon	103903	Bancroft	T G	16 72		20 83		BLM
Bull Canyon	103704	Arbon Valley	T A G	18 2 75		22 3 87		BLM
3 Mile	102004	Dubois	T H		19 44		22 48	USFS
Island Park	102105	Island Park	G T		49 5		55 13	USFS
Moody	102301	Kelly Canyon	G T		75 16		85 19	USFS
Scout Mountain*	103103	Pocatello	G T					USFS
Flint Creek	104203	Malad	C L T		19 5 19		22 6 24	USFS
Diamond Flat	103904	Soda Springs	G T		80 22		82 24	USFS
Pine Creek Pass*	102401	Pine Creek Pass	G T					USFS
Wayan	103102	Grays Lake	N A G		104 37 61		124 43 79	USFWS
Coyote Meadows*	480709	Jed Smith Wilderness	G T					USFS

*Station has only in place for 1 fire season – Not enough data for average values or agency climatic thresholds

Fire weather is reported to the field by EIIFC twice a day during fire season at approximately 1000 and 1600. It is also encouraged for field units to track weather by utilizing the EIIFC website (www.id.blm.gov/eiifc) and associated weather link.

Preparedness Planning Levels

The Forest FMO or the designated acting will recommend changes in preparedness planning levels in consultation with Zone Fire Management Staff. In doing so, fire staff will consider the following:

- Current and predicted weather
- Energy Release Component (ERC)
- 1000-hour fuel moisture level
- Resources committed to wildfires
- Resources committed to prescribed fire
- Potential for resource shortage
- Drought conditions
- Regional and National Preparedness Levels

f. Policy and Forest Service Manual and Handbook direction

EIIFC Dispatch Center will disseminate predicted preparedness levels along with the daily weather and fire danger forecasts.

Planning Level 1

- *Fire Activity:* Little or no fire activity. Preseason preparedness duties being accomplished.
- 1000 hour fuels: 17% or above

Planning Level 2

- *Fire activity:* Low to moderate levels of activity. Interagency involvement occurring. Potential for size class B or C incidents exists.
- 1000 hour fuels: 17% or above

Planning Level 3

- *Fire activity:* Multiple fires occurring that require commitment of local resources. There is an increased potential for fires size class C and larger.
- 1000-hour fuels: 10 to 15%

Planning Level 4

- *Fire activity:* Multiple A, B, C, and/or large fires. Extended attack is present..
- 1000-hour fuels: 8 to 10

Planning Level 5

- *Fire activity:* Multiple large fires occurring.
- 1000 hour fuels: 8% or below

Fire Management Staffing

All employees have a responsibility to be available for assignments during emergencies such as wildfires. The kind of position filled depends on criteria, including experience, qualifications and physical ability. Availability lists are processed by zone FMO's and EIIFC through the Resource Ordering Status System (ROSS).

A listing of Forest employees and their wildland fire qualifications is maintained at the East Idaho Interagency Fire Center [Appendix D \(Qualifications\)](#).

The USFS/BLM support a 20-person interagency hand crew, which is dispatched from EIIFC. This crew is called the TRC and is typically available for off Forest dispatch during the period of June 1st to October 1st. Crew Boss and squad boss assignments for the TRC crew are rotated between participating agencies.

During the annual Red Card meeting a list is generated by the Red Card committee that identifies Crew Boss and trainee Crew Bosses who will be used on the TRC during the fire season. This list is prioritized and followed when dispatching the crew.

Staffing for 7-day coverage will be provided by the use of staggering work schedules during the fire season. 24-hour availability will be accomplished through the use of cell phones and home phone number call lists.

g. Aviation Management

Direction for Aviation resources can be found in the Caribou-Targhee National Forest and Upper Snake River District (BLM East Zone) Aviation Management Plan. This plan is updated and reviewed annually and can be found at the EIIFC.

Current aviation resources available to the C-T NF include:

- Swan Valley – 1 Type III Helicopter and helitack crew. Available July to September.
- Pocatello – 1 Type III Helicopter and helitack crew. Available June thru September.
- Air tanker and air tanker base in Pocatello Idaho
- Two single engine air tankers based in Pocatello Idaho
- Lead Plane out of Boise or Ogden
- West Yellowstone – Smokejumpers. Available Mid-June through September.

Local vendors are usually available to provide point-to-point transportation, aerial ignition platforms, air attack platforms and reconnaissance missions to support resource management activities.

2. Initial Attack

Initial attack is an aggressive suppression action consistent with firefighter and public safety and values to be protected.

a. Information Used To Set Initial Attack Priorities

Initial attack responses will follow direction given in the Forest Pre-Planned Dispatch Plan found at EIIFC. Once the appropriate response has been determined and resources are in route to the fire, the appropriate Zone Duty Officer will be notified of the situation.

All initial attack responses will utilize the closest forces concept.

Initial attack forces are made up of the first suppression personnel to arrive at a fire in addition to reinforcements arriving during the first burning period. An Incident Commander on scene will be identified and will take control of the incident. This will be communicated to dispatch as well as to the remaining initial attack personnel on scene.

The correct zone initial attack radio frequencies will be established by Dispatch and passed onto the responding resources. These frequencies will be used during the entire length of the incident. Maps of initial attack zones and a listing of the radio frequencies associated with each are located in the C-T NF Fire Radio Plan [Appendix F \(C-T Radio Plan\)](#). All initial attack forces should have a current copy of this plan.

Should the fire complexity increase to a level exceeding the qualifications or capability of the Initial Attack IC, that individual will advise Dispatch via the radio that a more qualified Incident Commander is required along with recommendations for additional resources and overhead positions. The appropriate Zone Duty Officer may change the IC if complexity increases or decreases, making sure there is always a qualified IC for the level of complexity of the fire. Complexity Analysis found in the Great Basin Incident Organizer will be the minimum tool used to analyze the complexity of the incident. If the incident exceeds initial attack a complexity analysis along with a WFSA will be completed.

b. Criteria for the Appropriate Initial Attack Response

Interagency resources dispatched by EIIFC are typically able to handle multiple initial attack actions simultaneously between zones. In instances where multiple wildfire starts require prioritization, the Duty Officer will consider the following criteria in assigning incident priorities.

- Imminent threat to firefighter and public safety or private property and improvements
- Probability of success in using air tankers to retard the rate of spread until ground based resources are available
- LRMP direction for the subsection area
- Resource values at risk
- Projected commitment of initial attack resources
- Ability of cooperator resources to successfully conduct initial attack actions
- Road access or the lack thereof
- Single or multiple jurisdictions involved or likely to be involved
- Current and predicted fire weather
- Fire behavior currently exhibited by ongoing incidents in similar fuel types
- Proximity to and probability of fire spread into critical fuel types (i.e. deadfall)

The appropriate suppression response will be based on the current and predicted weather and fire behavior. For coordination purposes, it is necessary for all work supervisors to notify the Fire Management Officer of specifics of individual non-fire work crews. Specifics such as availability, location etc... are needed to manage a successful program.

All suppression action will be based on the Forest Land Management Plan direction for the particular subsection. The decision that determines an appropriate response should also use the following criteria.

- Threat to life or property
- Suppression costs
- Resource damage or loss (from fire and suppression actions)
- Environmental impacts (of fire and suppression)
- Current and predicted weather
- Smoke management considerations
- Suppression resource availability
- Political considerations

All fires will remain staffed until declared controlled or out. The IC will determine continued staffing procedures. At a minimum, regular burning period checks will be made until the IC declares the fire out.

Night travel and work will be a standard practice, except where deemed unsafe because of conditions such as weather, fire behavior, difficult or unfamiliar terrain, excessive snags, or lack of adequate radio contact.

Work shifts and travel will conform to National Work Rest guideline and be instituted on all fire regardless of the size of the fire.

Firefighters will maintain radio contact with their District Office or EIIFC while suppressing fires, and will check in at regular intervals. If the fire is in a location with poor or no radio communications (dead spot), a human relay/and or portable repeater will be set up and maintained while firefighters are that area.

c. Confinement as an Initial Action Strategy

The strategy of confinement may be selected if allowed by land management direction, but confinement may not be used to meet resource objectives. The Wildland Fire Situation Analysis may show that confinement is the most appropriate strategy when the fire is expected to exceed initial attack capability or planned management capability.

Safety of the public and firefighters should be the primary consideration when selecting the option of confinement. Additional considerations for selecting the most appropriate strategy include values at risk, probability of success, consequences of failure, cost, land management objectives, and public and adjacent landowner concerns. The preferred strategy should be implemented as quickly, safely and efficiently as possible.

d. Response Times

Fire response times vary depending on staffing, fire management activity in the area, resource availability, current local conditions, day of week and time of day.

During periods of highest activity in the fire season when no other fires are burning and staff is available, an engine can respond to most fire locations within one hour or less. Reinforcements from local agencies can respond to a fire on the C-T NF in two hours. Air tanker and helicopter response can typically reach a fire within an hour. Reinforcements from outside the immediate vicinity may not arrive until eight hours, or more, after a request for them is made. All response times are subject to availability of firefighting resources.

e. Restrictions and Special Concerns

Application of aerial retardant is prohibited within 300 feet of intermittent and perennial streams in accordance with agency guidelines. The CTF follows water course retardant guidelines found in [Appendix G \(Retardant Guidelines\)](#).

Mechanized equipment such as dozers and/or excavators is used on the Forest to assist in fire suppression actions. In instances where the use of mechanized equipment for fire line construction is contemplated, the ZFDO will involve the Forest or District resource advisor. On site reconnaissance and review will be conducted prior to engaging in mechanized line construction activities unless there is an imminent threat to firefighter / public safety or private property.

All identified cultural resources will be protected to the extent possible unless firefighter and public safety is compromised.

In general, dozers will be prohibited from operating on slopes greater than 40% but in some limited situations may be allowed on steeper slopes.

3. Extended Attack and Large Fire Suppression

a. Determine Extended Attack Needs

A wildfire is considered to be in extended attack status when:

- Suppression efforts have not succeeded or are not expected to reach containment within 24 hours.
- The Initial Attack Commander (ICT4 or ICT5) request additional resources that result in fire complexity attaining Type III status within or following the first 24 hours following the arrival of the first suppression resources.

b. Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) development

The Forest and Zone Fire Management Officer will insure that a Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) is prepared for all wildfires that escape or are expected to escape initial attack. Preparation of the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis will be coordinated with the responsible sub-unit Line Officer or designee.

The sub-unit Line Officer (District Ranger) or the Forest Supervisor is responsible to select the preferred management strategy for the incident. Selection of the preferred management strategy will not consider positive resource benefits resulting from wildfire as an objective.

Alternatives developed through the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis process must be consistent with the goals of the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan and must address the following:

- Firefighter and public safety
- Least cost alternative
- The alternative can be implemented
- Each alternative must be accompanied by a strategic plan of action
- The probability of success and consequences of failure must be assessed and displayed
- Each alternative will display the estimated numbers of acres burned, times for containment and control, suppression costs and resource damage

c. Complexity Decision Process for Incident Management Transition

Incident Management Transition will be determined through analysis utilizing a number of management tools.

These tools include such items as the "Incident Response Pocket Guides NFES #1077 2002", the WFSA plus computer program, the Great Basin Incident Organizer and the "Wildland and Prescribed Fire Management Policy Implementation Procedures Reference Guide 1998".

Type III Incident Management

A Type III Incident Commander will manage incidents that reach a Type III complexity level and associated command and general staff positions as appropriate for the incident. The East Idaho Fire Center (EIIFC) maintains a list of interagency personnel qualified at the Type III level and above. Individuals qualified and current at the Section Chief or Unit Leader level are included as Type III cadre.

Type I or Type II Incident Management

An incident complexity analysis is used to document the rationale of the fire management staff and responsible Line Officer in determining whether an extended attack incident is expected to, or has increased in complexity to ordering a Type II or Type I Incident Management Team.

Incident Transition Requirements for incoming Type 2 and Type 1 Incident Management Teams

The following elements will be completed prior to the arrival of a Type 2 or Type 1 Incident Management Team on the Unit:

- Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) complete with applicable incident objectives
- A complete set of alternatives analyzed including a least cost alternative
- A selected alternative to guide tactical suppression actions. The Forest Supervisor (or acting) will select the preferred alternative and sign the wildland fire situation analysis
- Agency Administrator Briefing guide completed
- Delegation of Authority completed and signed by the Forest Supervisor
[Appendix A \(Delegation of Authority\)](#)

The C-T NF will provide the following to the incoming incident management team.

- Proposed fire camp location
- Order of supplies and equipment (pre-order) as directed by the Logistics Section Chief
- An ample supply of topographic maps, base maps, etc...
- Transportation needs of the incoming fire teams (from ordering unit mobilization point to fire and on the fire)
- Line Officer Briefing Time and location

There should be TWO briefings of the incoming fire team. The first briefing should be by the line officer at a site away from the fire. The second briefing should be by the current Incident Commander and staff at the fire site. The Line Officer briefing should be as soon as possible after the arrival of the teams Incident Commander and his /hers chief of staff. It is impossible to list everything a team needs to know, however, as a minimum the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis and Line Officer Briefing Checklist should be completed. The local Incident Commander briefing shall take place when the incoming team arrives at the fire. The incoming team will not assume responsibility for the fire until they are thoroughly briefed and comfortable with the situation. Both Incident Commanders shall determine the exact time of command change. After the briefing, the team should start phasing into their areas of responsibility, but shall not assume control until the predetermined time.

The local units suppression forces may continue to work on the fire in various functions but should be relieved as soon as possible so that they can be rested and ready for Initial Attack or as reinforcements on other parts of the Forest.

The local units personnel that are in a training status should be given the opportunity to function in a “trainee” position with the incoming team if there is a qualified candidate available.

4. Exceeding existing WFSA – selecting a new strategy

A new Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) is required when the objectives of the existing WFSA are expected or have been compromised. The revised WFSA will include a new set of objectives and a range of alternatives and associated fallback strategies and worst-case outcomes.

Given the inherent inaccuracies in developing estimated costs associated with each alternative, exceeding the cost estimate for the preferred alternative should not in and of itself generate a need for a new WFSA. If this occurs, new revised cost estimates will be requested by the incident commander, added to the WFSA, and authorized by the appropriate Line Officer. Because of the effort to decrease the cost of large wildland fires, the Forest Supervisor has the authority to authorize a WFSA which have a preferred alternative which costs 2 million dollars or less, the Regional Forester must approve a WFSA with a preferred alternative of between 2 and 10 million and the Washington Office must approve WFSA's with a preferred alternative of over 10 million dollars. The Incident Commander and appropriate Line Officer will validate the existing WFSA each day.

5. Minimum Impact Management Tactics (MIMT) requirements

Implementation of the appropriate management response for all wildfires within and external to designated wilderness areas will utilize appropriate suppression tactics to minimize ground-disturbing activities (LRMP Guidelines).

All fire management activities will be conducted in such a way as to cause the least amount of unnecessary impact to the resources. The use of Minimum Impact Management Tactics (MIMT) will be stressed to all fire management forces. Methods and equipment used will be commensurate with the current predicted fire behavior, values at risk, and land management objectives. The strategy selected will be that which will safeguard human lives and accomplish objectives while resulting in the least alteration of the landscape and disturbance of natural and cultural resources.

MIMT will be utilized to halt the spread of fire in such a way as to protect natural and cultural values, and minimize the lasting impacts of suppression (Mohr 1988). MIMT does not imply or infer a relaxation of safe firefighting practices. Lines will be located to minimize the need for felling and bucking trees. Wet lines, foam, and the use of streams and other firebreaks all contribute toward minimizing suppression impacts on resources.

Fire camps and other incident facilities, when practical, will be located where minimal impact will occur to resources. An agency resource advisor must approve the location of all fire camps.

6. Other Fire Suppression Considerations

The following guidance will be used to assist incident management teams on any large fires, which occur on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest.

Dispatching Resources

Initial Attack remains an East Idaho Interagency Fire Center (EIIFC) responsibility, except in special circumstances when agreed upon by the unit line officer and incident management team (Example: Initial attack under Temporary Flight Restriction Areas developed by the incident management team). In most cases when an Incident Management Team has been ordered, the Dispatch Center Manager in consultation with the Forest FMO will initiate an expanded dispatch plan to support the incident management team.

Demobilization

Demobilization shall be carried out in an orderly manner to accomplish a cost effective program commensurate with efficient and effective organization practices.

Demobilization Planning

Planning for demobilization shall begin while the fire is being mobilized. Adequate records of personnel, transportation, and equipment used or being moved during mobilization are necessary. In many instances, demobilization occurs at the same time mobilization is occurring elsewhere. Good coordination can cut costs.

All dispatchers and coordinators involved in the mobilization-demobilization effort have a responsibility to assist the fire team in maintaining accurate records for the demobilization, planning.

Communications for demobilization shall be through established dispatch channels. All release orders shall be recorded on the appropriate Resource Order Form.

Demobilization Responsibilities**Incident Management Team**

- Demobilization plan prepared by Plans Chief jointly with Logistics Chief.
- Distribute plan to applicable team members, Forest dispatchers, and Regional Coordinator 12-24 hours prior to any releases.
- Hold all resources in fire camp or staging area until travel arrangements can be made or cleared by Expanded Dispatch and/or Demob Unit Leader.
- Group crews and overhead for common destination as much as possible minimize transportation costs. Place grouped resources on the same shifts 24 hours prior to intended release.
- See that Regional and Forest priorities for release are met.
- Insure that demobed personnel shall arrive at their home station before 2200 home station time. This may require postponement of release until the following day. This requirement may be waived if approved by the Regional Coordinator.

Expanded Dispatch

- Assist fire team in demobilizing planning
- See that Forest and Regional priorities for release are met.
- Keep IMT informed of demobilization plans, progress, and any changes.
- Arrange staging and transportation as necessary.
- Arrange to have agency representatives at departure/arrival points to keep dispatcher informed of problems and progress.
- All releases will be recorded on the appropriate Resource Order Form

Regional Coordinator/Dispatcher

- Set Regional priorities for demobilization of resource and notify Forest
- Relay demobilization plan to NIFC and/or home units.
- Keep NIFC and/or home units currently informed of demobilization process.
- Arrange for transportation as necessary.

Home of Support Unit Dispatchers

- Arrange for 24-hour communications if necessary.
- Schedule transportation as required.
- Arrange to have agency representatives at departure /arrival points to keep the dispatcher informed of progress.
- Notify dispatch when resources have arrived at home

The following release priorities shall normally apply unless the Eastern Great Basin or the Regional Office otherwise notifies the Forest.

Hand Crews

- Out of Region Agency Regular Crews
- Region 4 Agency Regular Crews
- Out of Region Hot Shot Crews
- Region 4 Hot Shot Crews

Helicopters

- Call When Needed “CWN” or rental agreement helicopters
- Within Region helicopters required for initial attack at home unit due to fire activity
- Out of Region helicopters
- Within Region helicopters not required at home unit for initial attack

Engines

- Local engines
- Within Region required for initial attack
- Out of Region
- Within Region not required for initial attack

Heavy equipment will follow the same general guidelines as engines with this exception. National Guard equipment should be released as soon as local resources can handle or replace them.

Overhead

Overhead releases shall be as required by the fire management team and the local unit's needs. Strive to consolidate overhead in groups of common destinations.

Release of Incident Management Team

A line officer or a designated representative must approve the date and time. The transition must be as smooth as possible and Forest fire team members should be assigned to start working with interagency team members at a predetermined time. The local fire team should be rested and off fire duty 24 hours prior to takeover.

The interagency team should begin phasing in the Forest team as soon as demobilization planning is complete and implementation is started. Fire management activity should be at a level and workload that Forest personnel can reasonably handle.

The Caribou-Targhee N.F. uses these criteria in release of an interagency team on suppression fires.

- Fire must be controlled
- Most line crews should be released that are not needed for patrol and mop up.
- Base fire camp shut down, reduced, or in the process.

- Plans Chief has prepared a narrative fire report and individual fire report as part of the final fire package.
- Finance Chief should have all known finance problems resolved. Contact made with Forest Budget and Finance personnel. Finance and/or Logistics Chief may have to stay longer or return to resolve problems.)
- Fire rehabilitation work completed to Forest's satisfaction and plan written to satisfaction.
- Overhead ratings completed and submitted to Forest as final package.

The Forest Supervisor or the acting should debrief the interagency team and prepare evaluation before release.

Forest Supervisor should give overall team performance in writing considering such things as; were the incident objectives met, were incident operations conducted in a cost effective and efficient manner, identify outstanding or poor performance of individuals, crew, or others involved in the suppression, mobilization, and demobilization of the fire, and were there any special problems or recommendations to be brought to the attention of the Forest or Region?

Wilderness Fire Suppression Actions

The fire suppression policy for wilderness areas in the C-T National Forest will be to conduct all fire management activities in a manner compatible with overall wilderness management objectives. The fire management objective in wilderness, as stated in the Forest Service Manual FSM 2324.21 is to permit lightning caused fires to play, as nearly as possible, their ecological role within wilderness.

A fire use guidebook has been completed for the Madison-Pitchstone Plateau, the Teton Range, Lemhi / Medicine Lodge, Caribou Range, and Caribou Overthrust Mountain Subsections of the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. Additional subsections to be added to the Guidebook in 2005 include; Centennials, Island Park, Big Holes, Webster Ridges / Valleys and Preuss Valleys / Hills.

The Forest Supervisor is delegated the authority to approve the use of helicopters, and ground based mechanized equipment such as chainsaws and portable pumps within wilderness areas to respond to an emergency fire situation. The responsible Zone FMO secures this approval on a case-by-case basis. The Regional Forester must approve any proposed use of dozers for suppression actions in wilderness areas and the placement of Remote Automated Weather Stations (RAWS) within the wilderness.

In general, the appropriate management response for wildfires within designated wilderness areas on the Forest incorporates Minimum Impact Management Tactics (MIMT). A comprehensive list of actions taken to protect wilderness values is included in the completed wildland fire use guidebook.

Use of airtankers and retardant in wilderness areas is discouraged except to provide for firefighter and public safety or to protect private in holdings or adjacent private land along wilderness boundaries where structures and other improvements are present.

C. Wildland Fire Use

Wildland fire use refers to the management of naturally ignited wildland fire to accomplish specific, pre-stated resource management objectives in predefined geographic areas as defined in Land Resource Management Plan and outlined within the fire plan.

The Caribou-Targhee has begun the process of analyzing each of the individual subsections within the Forest's administrative boundaries for wildland fire use suitability. At the present time five subsections (Madison-Pitchstone Plateaus, Teton Range, Lemhi-Medicine Lodge, Caribou Mountains and Caribou Overthrust Mountains) have been completed. The result of this effort has been the development of the *Caribou-Targhee Wildland Fire Use Guidebook*. Additional subsections will be added to the guidebook in the near future therefore expanding opportunities for fire use events on the C-T. For implementation during the 2005 season the following subsections will be added to the C-T Wildland Fire Use Guidebook: Centennials, Island Park, Big Holes, Pruess Ridges / Valleys and Websters Valleys / Hills. Comprehensive discussions of objectives, area descriptions/maps, protection considerations, as well as implementation procedures are described in C-T Fire Use Guidebook. Hardcopies of this document will be available at affected District Offices and an electronic version is available on the internet at: <http://fsweb/staff/fire/fireUseGuide/index.html>

1. Objectives of Wildland Fire Use and Relationship to LRMP

The Caribou-Targhee National Forest operates under three different Land and Resource Management Plans. The Targhee Plan was revised in 1997 and the Caribou Plan was revised in 2003. The Curlew Grasslands was written in 2002. Both the Caribou and the Targhee plans acknowledge the natural role of fire in fire dependant ecosystems and provide for fire use in appropriate prescriptive areas. Specifically, forest wide goals pertaining to fire include:

Targhee Plan

- Identify the historic role of fire and restore fire as an ecological process, where appropriate to achieve multiple-use and ecosystem management objectives.
- Prescribed fire and managed natural fire is used to achieve desirable soil and habitat characteristics, improve forest health, and create or maintain diversity in vegetative structure, composition, and patterns as described in a PFC analysis.
- Suppress fire in a safe, cost-effective manner where necessary to protect human life and safety, developments, structures, and sensitive resource values.
- Fuel accumulations are reduced and managed within their historic range.

Caribou Plan

- Forest resources are managed in accordance with the National Fire Plan, Ten-Year Comprehensive Strategy and Implementation Plan, and Cohesive Strategy to improve fire prevention and suppression, assist rural communities, reduce hazardous fuels, and restore fire-adapted ecosystems.
- Fire is allowed to play its natural role where appropriate and desirable to reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildland fires.
- Fire and other management activities restore or maintain desirable vegetative communities and ecosystem processes. Fire management prescriptions are written to take advantage of natural lightening starts and to restore historical fire regimes.
- Fire and other management activities are used to treat natural and activity fuels with priority on reducing risk from uncharacteristically large or intense wildland fires and protecting communities in the wildland-urban interface.

2. Decision Criteria For WFU

The decision to manage a wildland fire use event on the C-T NF will be guided by several parameters including:

- The ignition must be lightning caused.
- Firefighter and public safety
- Key management positions such as a fire use manager (FUMA) and long term fire analyst (LTAN) must be available and dedicated to management of the incident.
- Proximity to boundary of a wildland fire use area and/or potential to exceed pre-established boundaries.
- Ability of the incident to meet resource management objectives.
- Potential to damage or destroy significant improvements, natural or cultural resource values.
- Projected scope and duration of impacts to air quality.
- Political considerations and impacts to social values.
- Projected duration of the incident and ability to provide management oversight and necessary implementation actions.
- Fire management activity at the National, Regional, Greater Yellowstone Area and Unit level.
- Current and predicted fire behavior including expected spread into adjacent fuel profiles.
- Seasonal, current and predicted weather and fuel conditions (Energy Release Component, 1000-hour fuel moistures, drought index, time of year, probability of a season-ending weather event).
- Historic fire occurrence, historic weather and evaluation of past fire intensity, size and duration.
- Cost benefit ratio.

The Federal Fire Policy requires that sound risk management be a foundation for all fire management activities. Recent reviews and audits have also stressed the need for risk management. In fact, risk management is rapidly becoming a cornerstone phrase associated with fire management. A report by the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) (2001), " stresses the role of risk reduction in wildlands as a critical mitigation approach to improve community protection. The Government Accountability Office (USGAO 2004) completed a report on risk assessment associated with the fuel treatment program. This report also stresses the importance of risk assessment in fire and fuels management.

Using fire to meet resource objectives contains an inherent level of risk given that we are dealing with a number of unknowns and uncertainty in what the future will bring. The relative risk rating is intended to characterize the general magnitude of risks associated with implementing a wildland fire use incident at a snapshot in time. It is an attempt to qualify the level of uncertainty regarding the eventual outcomes of the fire in relation to the management objectives and other mandates. The relative risk rating is a direct input into the decision criteria checklist, wildland fire use management assessment, and periodic fire assessment.

The Wildland Fire Relative Risk Assessment provides the Agency Administrator with a quick but comprehensive assessment of the relative risk of the fire. This is a qualitative process that can be completed in less time than a quantitative long-term risk assessment. The relative risk rating produced from this assessment is a decision support aid for the Agency Administrator in answering the Decision Criteria Checklist elements and during the Periodic Fire Assessment.

The relative risk assessment chart uses three risk components: values, hazard, and probability. Each of these components is assessed in an independent step. Then, the three outputs are evaluated in a final step that provides the relative risk for the fire. Each risk component is defined by three variables. One variable is located on the right and one on the left side of the box and the third variable is defined by three interior lines extending from top to bottom (Figure 4).

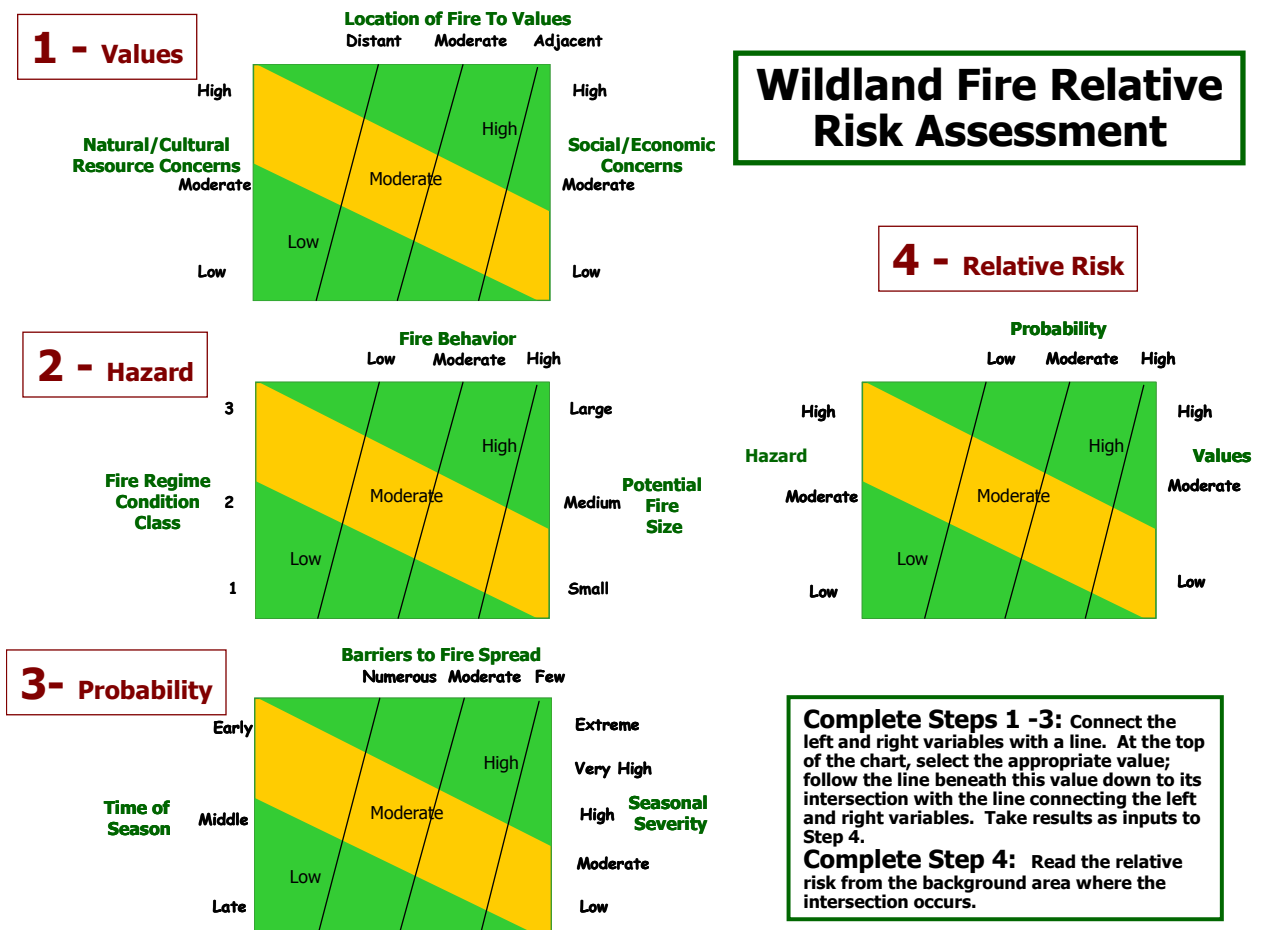
Values: Values are those ecologic, social, and economic resources that could be lost or damaged because of a fire. Ecologic values consist of vegetation, wildlife species and their habitat, air and water quality, soil productivity, and other ecologic functions. Social effects can include life, cultural and historical resources, natural resources, artifacts, sacred sites. Economic values make up things like property and infrastructure, economically valuable natural and cultural resources, recreation, and tourism opportunities.

Hazard: The hazard in wildland fire is made up of the conditions under which it occurs and exists, its ability to spread and circulate, the intensity and severity it may present, and its spatial extent.

Probability: Probability refers to the likelihood of a fire becoming an active event with potential to adversely affect values.

The Wildland Fire Relative Risk Assessment Chart is shown in Figure 1. Four steps are necessary to complete the risk assessment. Step-by-step instructions for completing the Wildland Fire Relative Risk Assessment are included in the C-T Wildland Fire Use Guidebook.

Figure 1 Wildland Fire Relative Risk Rating



Initial information to consider in developing the rating for the individual element is provided in the C-T Wildland fire Use Guidebook. This descriptive list is not all inclusive and items on the list can be expected to vary by place and time. Users are expected to exercise their judgment in determining the ratings; information is intended to provide both guidance in completion and flexibility in determining exactly what the descriptions mean. Local information can and should be amended to the lists to better reflect site-specific situations.

3. Preplanned Implementation Procedures

The Zone Fire Management Officer or designated duty officer will use the Wildland Fire Implementation Plan (Stage I) described in the *Wildland and Prescribed Fire Management Policy Implementation Procedures and Reference Guide* to assist in making decisions on the type of action to be taken on potential wildland fire use. Stage I (Strategic Fire Size-Up, Decision Criteria Checklist, Wildland Fire Relative Risk Assessment) will be completed and the subsequent recommendation for managing a wildland fire use event will be taken to the Agency Administrator or designee for approval.

The agency administrator supported by the fire use manager (FUMA) and Zone FMO will prepare a WFIP to evaluate and document decisions for the appropriate response to candidate WFU events. Pre planned criteria and implementation procedures for Forest areas approved for wildland fire use are detailed in the *C-T Wildland Fire Use Guidebook*.

4. Impacts of Plan Implementation

Fire Use will be designed to provide protection for life, property, public safety and natural resource management. All programs will be planned with these concerns, along with cost effectiveness, as primary factors. It is anticipated that both positive and negative impacts will result with implementation of fire use plans. These impacts are highly variable in both scale and duration making them very difficult to quantify. The anticipated impacts include:

- Impacts to visual quality in adjacent communities; reduced visibility and safety-related impacts to motorists along proximate travel corridors.
- Economic impacts to special use permittees (outfitters and range permittees) where a wildland fire use incident requires moving their camps, facilities or closing the area due to public safety or rehabilitation considerations.
- Adverse affects on sensitive wildlife species may be incurred through loss of habitat or fragmentation of travel corridors.
- Economic impacts to local communities incurred through loss of revenue associated with reduced numbers of visitors.
- Unavoidable impacts to scenic qualities and vistas associated with stand replacement incidents within the viewshed of adjacent private lands.
- Potential degradation of downstream water quality due to sediment deposition and mass movement of sensitive soils.

5. Required Personnel – Below are the minimum qualifications found in the Wildland Fire Use Implementation Guidebook.

WFIP Stage	Minimum Planning Qualifications	Minimum Implementation Qualifications *
WFIP Stage I	Unit Duty Officer	Incident Commander Type 4 (ICT4)
WFIP Stage II	Fire Use Manager Type 2 (FUM2)	Fire Use Manager Type 2 (FUM2)
WFIP Stage III	Fire Use Manager Type 2 (FUM2)	Fire Use Manager Type 2 (FUM2)

*(Use Fire Use Manager Decision Chart to determine recommended position)

C-T NF qualified wildland fire use individuals are found in [Appendix D \(Qualifications\)](#):

Line officers must meet the standards outlined in the Region 4 supplement 5100-2001-5, 5140.42 prior to being given delegation of authority to approve Wildland Fire Implementation Plans. The Forest Fire Management Officer and Forest Supervisor will review designated personnel that are delegated the authority for WFU approval on an annual basis. Training, experience and knowledge will be part of this review prior to issuance of the delegation of authority letter. [Appendix A \(Delegations\)](#)

Implementation and management of a wildland fire use program will generally consist of the following staffing:

Low complexity events

- Fire Use Manager Type 2 (FUM2)
- Type 3 IC
- Information officer

High complexity events:

- Fire Use Manager Type 1 (FUM1) or type 2 IC
- Operations Section Chief Type 2
- Logistics Section Chief Type 2
- Planning Section Chief Type 2
- Safety Officer Type 2
- Information Officer Type 2
- GIS Technician
- Cost Unit Leader
- Time Unit Leader
- Long-term Fire Analyst (Formerly Prescribed Fire Behavior Analyst)
- Fire Effects Monitor
- FUMTs can have three trainee positions

Staff positions responsible for initiating and implementing steps in the Stage I decision process necessary to support the appropriate management response may include, but are not limited to:

- Fire Management Officer or acting duty officer
- District Ranger or acting
- Archaeologist
- Wildlife Biologist
- Wilderness Resource Advisor

6. Public Information

Wildland fire use events offer a high quality opportunity for public information, education and interpretation to assist in building support and understanding of the Wildland Fire Use Program. Detailed descriptions of inter/intra-agency coordination and inform and involve plans are located in the *Caribou-Targhee Wildland Fire Use Guidebook*. Actions to be implemented for informing the public and providing interpretation of wildland fire use include:

- Pre-fire - When planning, zoning, and decision criteria are put into effect, public information officers can respond with thematic programs, guided walks, publications, exhibits and press releases which incorporate this information along with the ecological and resource management rationale for natural fire prescriptions. Public information regarding wildland fire use planning should be distributed through the Public Affairs Office.
- During the fire - The public affairs office will assume the lead role in coordinating information to be released to the media and the public. Because of the high and often emotional interest in fires, it is essential that key agency staff, be fully integrated into information dissemination about on-going fires. This would include but not be limited to daily briefings, receipt of all press releases, communication by telephone and radio.

During fire use events appropriate information should be placed at trailheads, campgrounds and visitor contact points to supplement visitor information concerning the activity. These signs will be used to administratively direct, inform, guide and caution visitors regarding existing fire conditions and public safety.

Post-fire - Following the fire, agencies should consider planning for:

- Interpretive devices such as wayside exhibits or self-guided nature trails
- Interpretive services such as guided walks through burn areas deemed safe.
- Illustrated evening interpretive programs incorporating slides taken during and following the fire to illustrate ecological processes at work.
- Formal exhibits or new publications as needed.
- Educational activities including walks through old burns or viewing before-and-after photographs of burns to educate visitors to positive ecological effects of wildland fire use.

Initial news queries on wildland fires use events will generally be directed to the C-T NF Public Affairs Officer (PAO). Prompt reply to such queries is essential and should include interpretation of the wildland fire use program. The Forest Fire Duty Officer or FUMA will provide periodic fire information update to the Forest PAO. Requests for media visits will be directed to the PAO and coordinated with the Fire Use Manager (FUMA). Requests for aerial photographic coverage by news media of wildland fire use events must be approved by the FUMA and coordinated with the Forest Dispatcher and the PAO.

In addition to a specific inform and involve plan, a list of key agency, interagency, state and congressional delegation contacts has been developed and is located in the Inter/Intra-agency section of the *Caribou-Targhee Wildland Fire Use Guidebook*.

7. Records

Final permanent project record for a wildland fire use event will include:

- The approved planning documents including all amendments and revisions (WFIP, WFSA, Risk Analysis, etc.)
- Monitoring reports and summaries of findings, along with a summary of all monitoring activities.
- Periodic Fire Assessment and certification documents.
- Funding codes and cost accounting.
- All fire use fires will be mapped with GPS and the resulting perimeter included in the Forest GIS database. In addition a hardcopy map of the event will be included in the permanent project record.
- Fire behavior information.
- Digital photo log of significant fire activity, fire effects, and management actions
- C-T NF will report wildland fire use events on the appropriate forms (FS-5100-29 or FS-5100-29t) within timeframes specified in FSH 5109.14, section 06.

8. Cost Tracking

A “G”-code will be assigned by the EIFC for each wildland fire use incident in order to track costs. All costs associated with a wildland fire use event will be charged to the account assigned to that fire. This will include costs directly charged to the fire and those that are made in support of the fire. The fire management officer will be responsible for gathering and tracking the charges for each wildland fire use event. If in the course of the management of the fire use event, the management response changes to suppression, then a “P” code must be assigned and all costs associated with the fire now being charged to the “P”code. Once the fire is managed as a suppression response it cannot revert back to being managed as wildland fire use. Fire cost records will be included in the permanent project record for the Wildland Fire Use Event.

D. Prescribed Fire

1. Planning and Documentation

a. Annual Activities

The following activities will occur annually on the C-T NF.

- Inventory and identify fuel treatment units
- Participate in interdisciplinary teams (IDT)
- Complete required NEPA documentation
- Prepare project plans and layout
- Prioritize proposed projects based on current year budget allocation
- Prepare and review burn plans
- Obtain burn permits
- Implement projects
- Award contracts
- Complete monitoring requirements
- Report accomplishments
- Submit proposed burns to Montana/Idaho Smoke Management Unit
- Submit accomplishment acres to Montana/Idaho Smoke Management Unit

b. Long term prescribed fire strategy

The Caribou-Targhee is currently organized into seven Fire management Zones (FMZs). Through development of Fire Program Analysis (FPA) for Southeastern Idaho these FMZ's were incorporated into Fire Management Units (FMU's). FMU's are cross agency boundaries and each have similar management objectives.

Long term prescribed fire strategies will be developed for each FMU and implemented. A table of planned burn units is located in [Appendix H](#).

c. Personnel and Qualifications Necessary to Plan and Execute the Prescribed Fire Program

Training and qualifications procedures are outlined in the NWCG 310-1, FSM 5140, and FSM 5109.17 and in the C-T Fire and Aviation Training and Qualifications Program [Appendix D \(Qualifications\)](#). The Intelligence Dispatcher at EIFC maintains the qualification and training database. Burn projects will only occur when there are sufficient and qualified personnel on scene as specified in the burn plan. In order to operate efficiently it is anticipated that the C-T prescribed fire program needs to have available two complex burn bosses, 4 intermediate burn bosses and 4 experienced burn plan writers. The list of persons qualified for prescribed fire is in [Appendix D \(Qualifications\)](#).

d. Define weather, fire behavior and fire effects monitoring associated with prescribed fire applications. Include both short-term and long-term effectiveness monitoring objectives, and any issues or concerns identified in related NEPA documents.

A detailed fire/vegetation prescription is outlined in the burn plan. The prescription includes parameters for fire behavior and environmental variables. Weather observations are monitored at the project area by manual weather collection of temperature, relative humidity, wind speed and direction, and cloud cover, or by remote automated weather station (RAWS). The RAWS collects the dry bulb, wet bulb, relative humidity, calculated 10-hr. fuel moisture, wind speed and direction, minimum and maximum temperature and humidity (past 24 hours), and rainfall. A post burn summary and checklist form located in the burn plan is completed to determine if the resource goals and air quality objectives were met. A risk assessment is included in the burn plan to address and mitigate potential hazards. The measurable objectives identified in the FMU are verified and monitored through the burn plan as described above.

The prescribed fire manager and/or burn boss will maintain a burn project folder that will contain the following documentation:

- Approved burn plan, smoke plan, and job hazard analysis
- Go-no-go checklist
- Post burn monitoring and accomplishment forms
- Burn organization chart
- Maps
- Weather files containing: spot request forms, daily spot weather forecasts, RAWS weather data, on site observation forms, smoke monitoring and dispersion observations
- Provide the format for critiques of prescribed fire projects.
- Vegetation prescription and treatment objectives

e. Provide format for critiques of prescribed fire projects.

An after action review will be held for all prescribed fire projects. Documentation of the review is included in the project folder and is maintained by the burn boss.

f. Reporting and Documentation Requirements

The prescribed fire report 5100-29T [Appendix I](#) will be completed for all prescribed burn projects. A copy of the report will be sent to dispatch within 10 days of project completion. A copy will also be sent to the Forest Fuels Specialist. The NEPA project file for each burn project will include the following minimum information:

- A completed and signed burn plan, with any amendments signed and attached
- Completed 5100-29T
- A completed map of the burned area at the 1:24000 scale. Treatment areas will be mapped by GPS and converted to an ARCINFO/ARCVIEW file for inclusion in the Forest GIS database.
- An approved Vegetation prescription or narrative statement of burn objectives.
- Standard cost accounting including personnel, equipment and other significant costs
- A narrative completed by the Burn Boss describing relevant significant events occurring during implementation of the burn.
- Copy of smoke permit (if applicable)

g. Develop historic fuel treatment map of post burn activities that affect planned actions.

Efforts are currently underway to compile zone prescribed fire information for inclusion into a Forest wide GIS coverage.

h. Burn Plans

Burn plans will be completed using a format consistent with the direction found in FSM 5140 and Chapter 4 of the Implementation Guide. A standardized Region 4 plan has been developed in accordance with the above direction and is located in [Appendix J](#).

2. Exceeding Existing Prescribed Fire Burn Plan.

Any prescribed fire that exceeds prescription or identified contingency area will be considered an escaped fire. Spot fires may not constitute an escape if they can be contained in accordance with standards identified in the burn plan. Following designation of an escape, a Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) will be completed and approved by the appropriate Line Officer.

3. Air Quality and Smoke Standards

Prescribed fires are subject to all state and federal air quality requirements. Prescribed burns will be implemented in accordance with these requirements and a conscious attempt made to minimize smoke impacts associated with the prescribed fire program..

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently set policy, which does not excuse wildland prescribed fires from exceeding National Ambient Air Quality

Standards (NAAQS) were developed for PM-10 (particulate matter having a nominal aerodynamic diameter less than or equal to 10 microns)(EPA 1996). Even more recently, the EPA issued standards for PM 2.5 and ozone to take effect September 1997 (USDA 1997). The EPA will develop broader guidance in the near future to address issues raised by smoke emissions from wildland prescribed fires and other policy issues surrounding prevention of significant deterioration, conformity, visibility protection programs and regional haze.

Class I Airsheds within the C-T NF include the Jedediah Smith and Winegar Hole Wildernesses on the Teton Basin and Ashton Ranger Districts. Class I Airsheds bordering the C-T include Grand Teton National Park and Yellowstone National Park.

Smoke sensitive areas on and proximate to the C-T include: Ashton, Island Park, Dubois, West Yellowstone, Teton Valley, Swan Valley, Irwin, Alpine and the Redrock Refuge on the Targhee end of the Forest and Montpelier, Soda Springs, Malad, Afton, and Pocatello on the Caribou end. Idaho Department of Environmental Quality formally classifies the area surrounding Pocatello and Chubbuck as a non-attainment area.

The Caribou-Targhee National Forest is a member of the Montana/Idaho State Airshed Group. At this time the Montana/Idaho State Airshed Group Operations Guide has no specific operating procedures or provisions for wildland fire use (WFU) other than notification of them. However, the website for the above airshed group (<http://www.smokemu.org>) should be consulted for identified WFU levels. These levels will summarize and map predicted air quality data and provide input for Go/No Go decision-making regarding smoke impacts. *Currently, a permit is not required for WFUs originating in Idaho.*

For prescribed fire activities, the Montana/Idaho State Airshed Group will monitor air quality in the Idaho portion of the subsections. Between September 1 and November 31, burners belonging to the airshed group are required to notify the airshed coordinator (EIIFC Center Manager) by 10 a.m. the day prior to burning. The coordinator will determine the go/no go status of burning in relation to smoke issues. Burn permits are required for all prescribed fires. Although the PM 2.5 standards are under review, the Airshed group will continue to monitor them for air quality.

The monitoring unit for Wyoming portions of the Forest will be the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Air Quality (WDEQ/AQD). WDEQ/AQD requires a burn permit for prescribed fire. Requests for permits are made to: Mark Arn at marn@missc.state.wy.us. He can also be reached by phone at: (307) 777-7391 or by fax at (307) 777-5616. Permits will be issued within a week of notice and remain valid for one year from the date they are issued. WDEQ/AQD requires 24-hour notification prior to each burn.

The following items are to be included with the permit request:

- Legal location
- Proposed date of burn
- A completed Simple Approach Estimation Model (SASEM) run. The run will include type of fuel, duration, and potential receptor sites. The SASEM run should also be attached to the project burn plan.

Currently, permits are not required for WFU. Air quality standards for Wyoming are PM 2.5 and will be monitored by WDEQ/AQD.

E. Non-Fire Fuels Applications

1. Mechanical Treatment and Other Applications

a. Annual Activities

Particular areas of hazardous fuels that are identified as needing mechanical treatment will be assessed according to cost effectiveness and impact on damage to the resource. Areas that have previously received treatment will be reassessed to determine when the next treatment will need to be scheduled. An annual forest Timber/Fuels coordination meeting will be held to review projects for the next field season and coordinate activities.

b. Equipment and Seasonal Use Restrictions

Project equipment will be selected to maximize cost effectiveness and minimize resource impacts. Equipment selected and the period of treatment will be subject to approval by the District Ranger.

c. Effects Monitoring Required

Project specific monitoring needs will be established prior to implementation and documented in the project file. The objectives of monitoring may encompass: quantifying the success of the treatment, documenting any resource damage and conducting post project assessment to identify undesirable species occurrence or other effects of the treatment.

d. Critique of Mechanical Treatment Projects

Upon completion of each project a critique will be held to measure success of project goals and objectives. The critique will be used to evaluate treatment methods, resource damage and other relevant information useful to future projects. This information will be documented in a project completion report.

e. Cost Accounting, Reporting and Documentation

All costs charged to a project will be tracked and entered into the appropriate agency tracking system. This information will be used to update and refine unit cost projections for program-of-work planning. This information will be entered into the NFORS database.

f. Annual Planned Project List

See [Appendix H \(Project List\)](#).

F. Emergency Rehabilitation and Restoration

The Forest Supervisor shall appoint a Forest Coordinator. The Forest BAER Coordinator will be responsible for locating BAER Team members for wildfires on the Forest that are over 300 acres in size. Once a BAER Team is assigned to an incident, the BAER Coordinator will facilitate activities between the BAER Team Leader and the Forest Supervisor. See [Appendix K \(For current year C-T BAER Plan.\)](#)

V. Organization and Budget Parameters**A. Current fiscal year budget and the ability to support planned and unplanned actions****Preparedness**

The Caribou-Targhee NF fire preparedness program is funded by allocations based on out-year planning using the National Fire Management Analysis System (NFMAS). Funding levels for the 2005 fiscal year are based on this process. Starting in fiscal year 2005 the new Fire Program Analysis (FPA) will be utilized for funding in out-year 2008. The forest will staff the following preparedness resources in FY 2005:

- Two (2) - Type III helicopters, rappel qualified
- One (1) - Type II handcrew
- Fourteen (14) – Type 6 engines

Engines are staffed five (5) days per week with qualified personnel. Helicopters are staffed seven (7) days per week.

The forest is divided into four zones to administer fire programs at the Ranger District level. The zones are comprised as follows:

North Zone.....Ashton/Island Park Ranger District and Dubois Ranger District

South Fork Zone....Palisades Ranger District and Teton Basin Ranger District

Portneuf Zone.....Westside Ranger District

Bear River Zone....Soda Springs Ranger District and Montpelier Ranger District

Interagency Coordination

Interagency coordination and cooperation are integral to successful implementation of fire management programs. In accordance with national direction, during the fall of 2004 agencies throughout Eastern Idaho came together under a Charter agreement establishing the Eastern Idaho Fire Planning Unit. The Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs and the State of Idaho worked together in a common interagency process for strategic fire planning and budgeting called Fire Program Analysis. Planning efforts will establish future budget requests and allocation processes; models; assumptions and displays among agencies. The Caribou-Targhee NF and the BLM- Idaho Falls District have an interagency partnership in several aspects of the fire program. Positions that are common among agencies are combined into interagency-shared positions. These positions complete work for both agencies with funding provided by the employing agency: Aviation Manager, Fire Dispatch Center Manager, Fire Cache Manager, Fire Planner, Fire Business Management Specialist and Training Specialist.

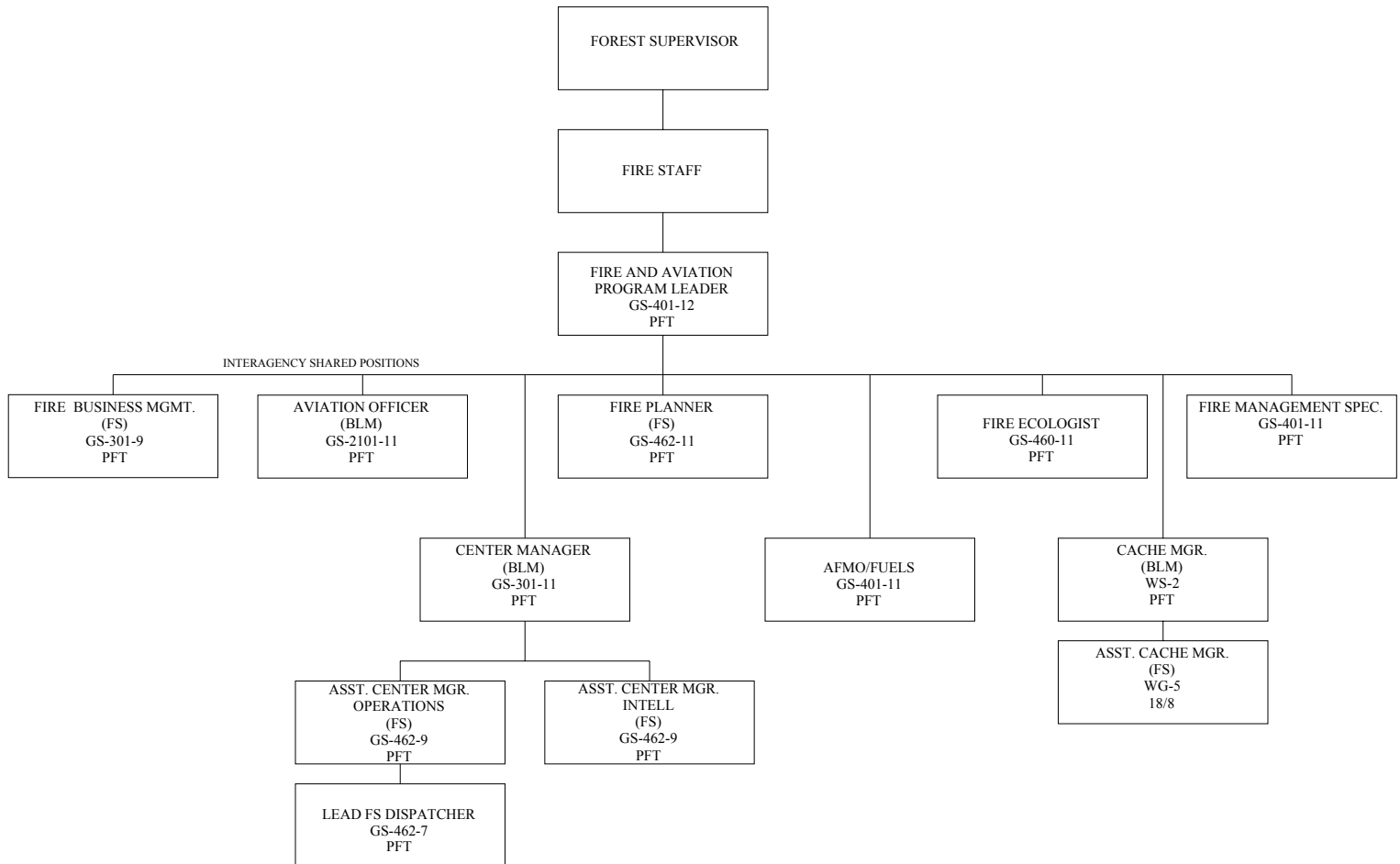
The following guides are used to mobilize resources locally, geographically and nationally and are located in the dispatch center:

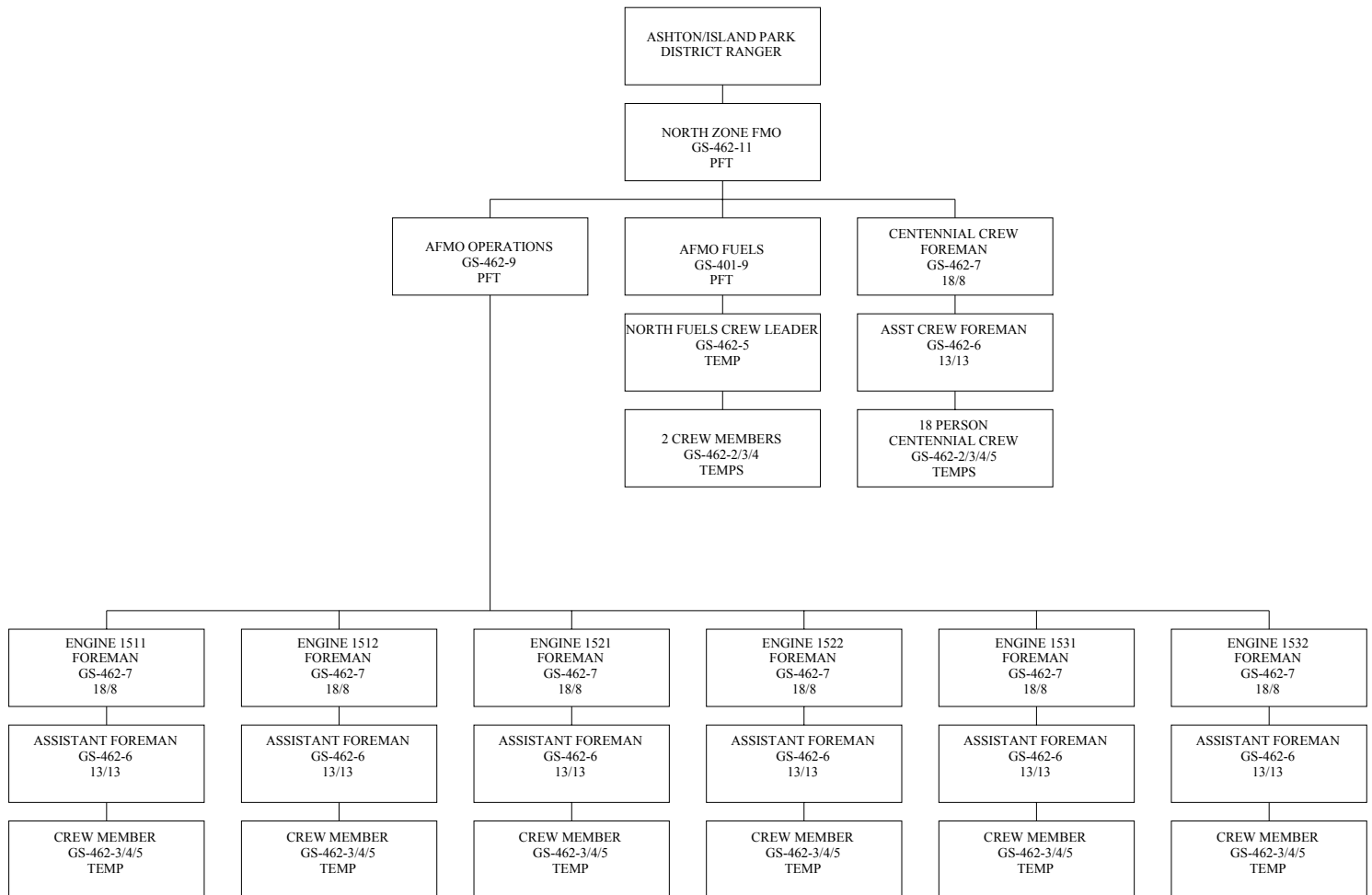
- Eastern Idaho Interagency Pre-dispatch plan
- Eastern Idaho Interagency Operating Plan
- Eastern Idaho Mobilization Guide
- Expanded Dispatch Plan
- Eastern Idaho Service and Supply Plan

The Form FS-5100-2, Integrated Fire Management Organization and Financial Plan for 2003 fiscal year, can be found in [Appendix L \(Financial Plan\)](#).

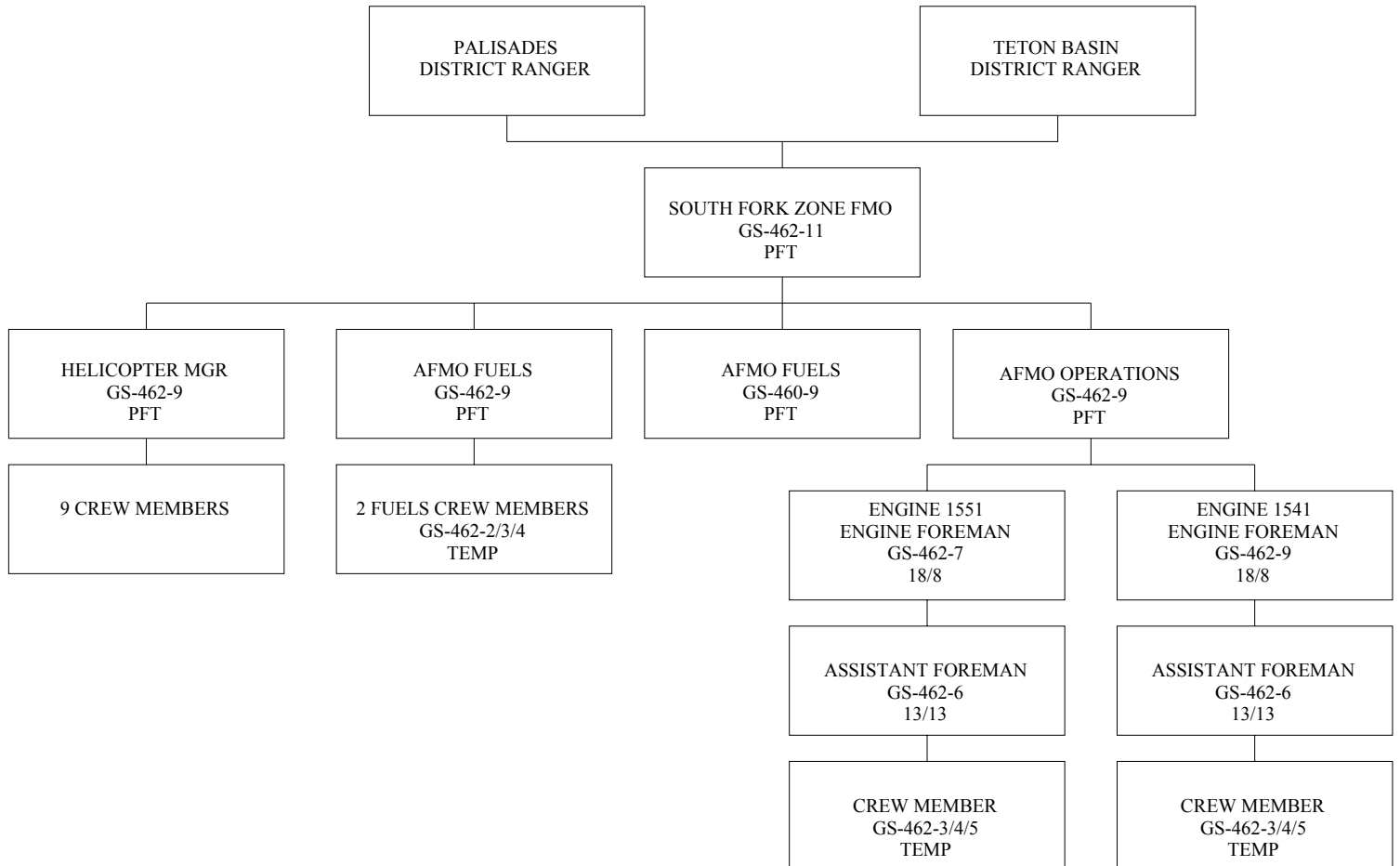
Fuels

The Caribou-Targhee NF fuels program is funded by allocations based on out-year planning using the Budget Formulation and Execution System (BFES). Funding for 2005 will be a mix of the past BFES process and an incremental adjustment up or down based on the Regions target and what each forest can produce. At the present time the final allocation has not been finalized but Appendix H has the Forest project list. There are also projects funded with 10% that is pooled in the Regional Office and used regionally to fund a process where the Idaho Forests in the region compete for these funds. The Caribou-Targhee had 2 projects funded through this process, the Island Park Interface project and the Portneuf West Bench project.

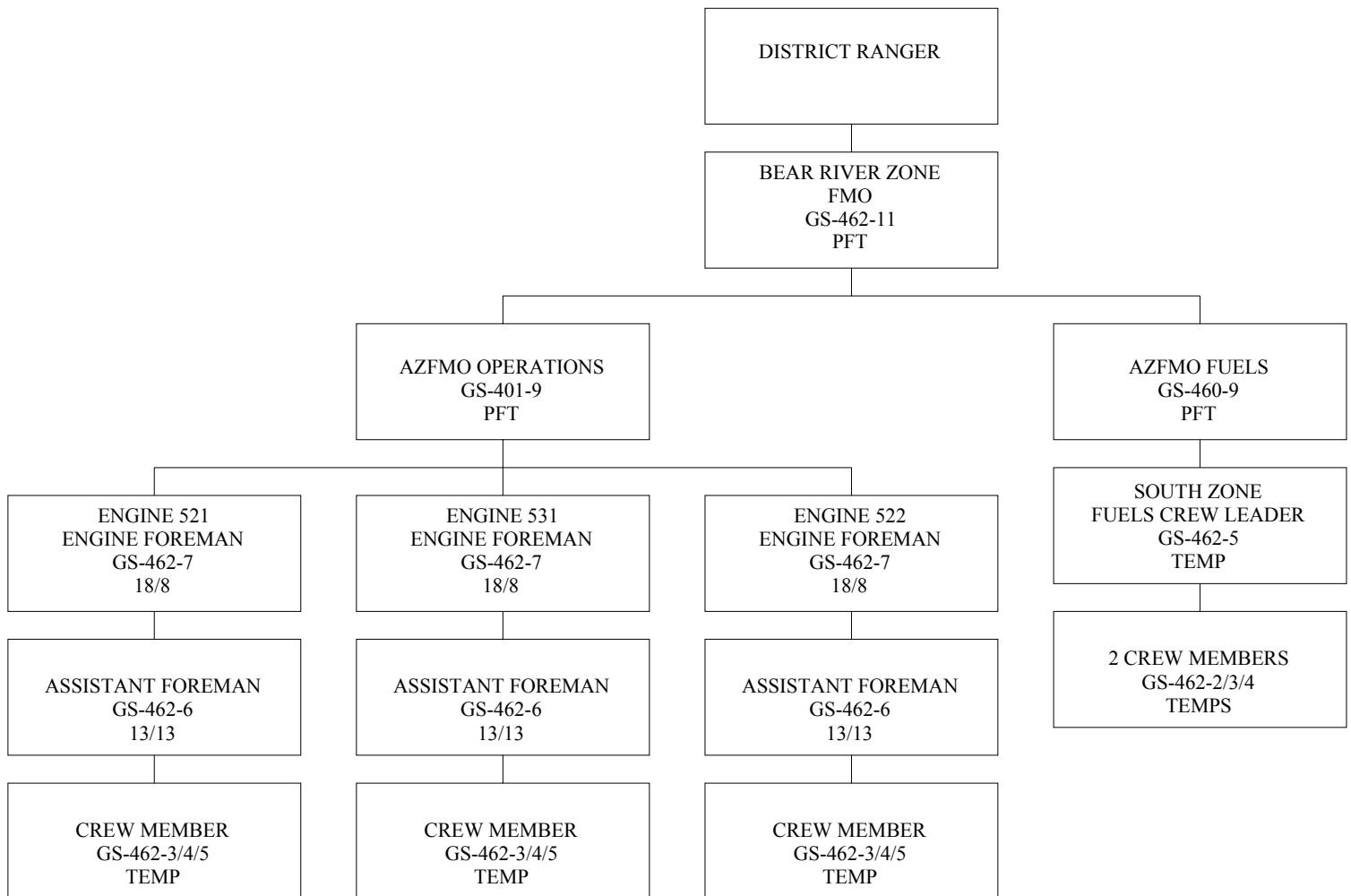
B. Organization chart supported by the current fiscal year budget**C-T FIRE ORGANIZATION
HEADQUARTERS STAFF**

**C-T DISTRICT FIRE ORGANIZATION
NORTH ZONE**

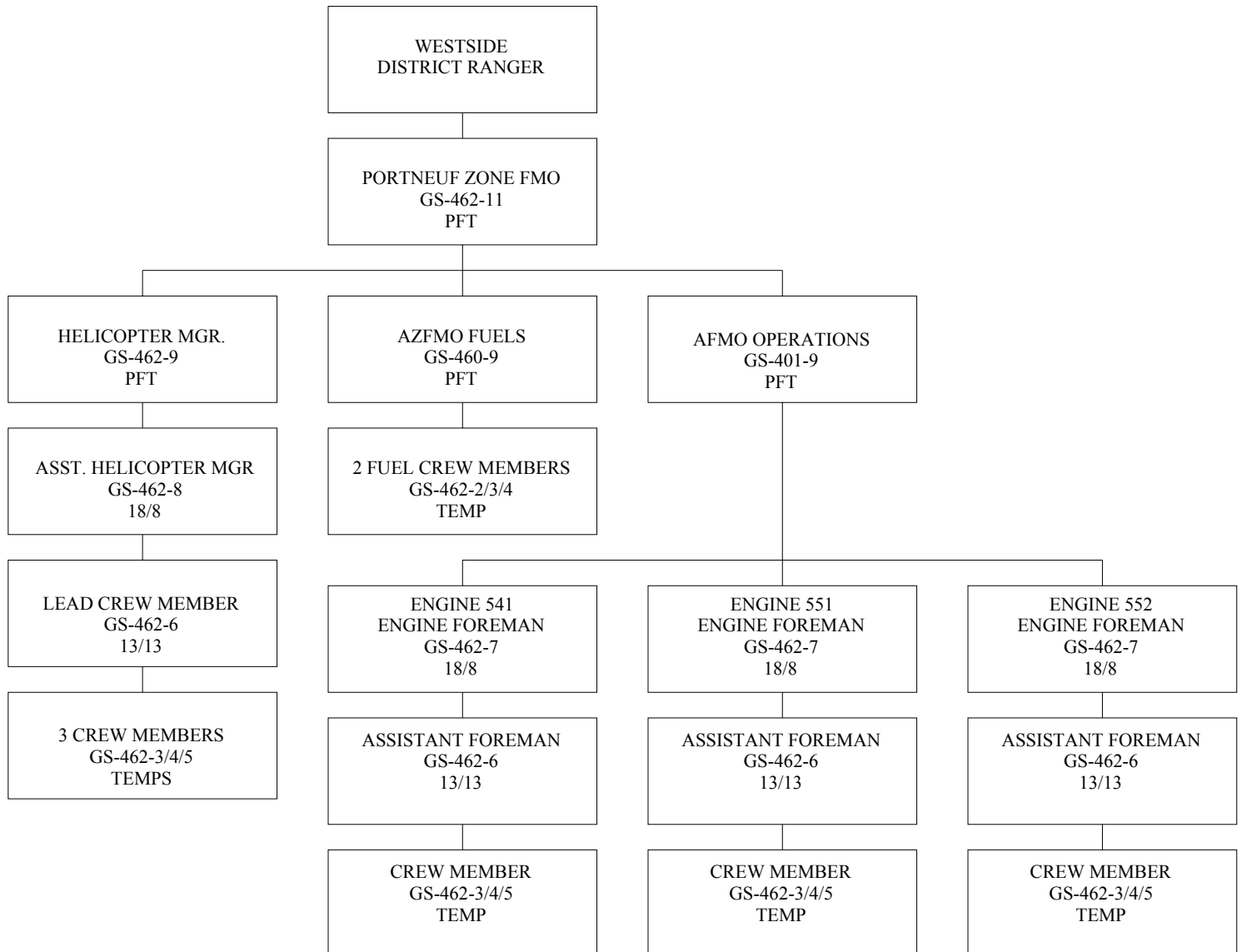
C-T DISTRICT FIRE ORGANIZATION SOUTH FORK ZONE



C-T DISTRICT FIRE ORGANIZATION BEAR RIVER ZONE



C-T DISTRICT FIRE ORGANIZATION PORTNEUF ZONE



C. Cooperative agreements and interagency contacts

The C-T is a participant to the following agreements:

Interagency Agreement

- Interagency Agreement between the USDI Bureau of Land Management Upper Snake River District and USDA Forest Service Caribou -Targhee National Forest
- Operating Plan Participating Agreement between Idaho Department of Corrections St. Anthony Work Camp and USDA Forest Service - Bridger- Teton National Forest and Caribou-Targhee National Forest
- Interagency Fire Management Agreement between the following Greater Yellowstone Area Agencies: USDA Forest Service- Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, Bridger-Teton National Forest, Custer National Forest, Gallatin National Forest, Shoshone National Forest, Targhee National Forest; USDI- National Park Service, Grand Teton National Park, Yellowstone National Park

Fire Protection Agreement

- Interagency Agreement between USDA Forest Service - Caribou-Targhee National Forest and USDI Bureau of Land Management
- Statewide Annual Operating Plan - State of Idaho, Idaho Department of Lands; Department of Agriculture- Intermountain Region, Northern Region, Pacific Northwest Region; USDI - Bureau of Land Management Idaho, National Park Service-Pacific West field Area, Bureau of Indian Affairs- Portland Area, Fish and Wildlife Service- Pacific Region
- Memorandum of Understanding between USDI Bureau of Land Management - Upper Snake River District and Upper Columbia-Salmon Clearwater District, and USDA Forest Service - Salmon-Challis National Forest, and Caribou-Targhee National Forest

Mutual Aid Agreements

- Cooperative Fire Control Agreement and Annual Operating Plan for Mutual Aid between USDI – Upper Snake River District, USDA Forest Service-Caribou and Targhee National Forest and forty (40) city, county and rural fire departments throughout Eastern Idaho. ([Appendix M](#))

Intergovernmental Agreements

- Gateway Interagency Fire Front
- Eastern Idaho Fire Cooperators
- Northern Utah Fire Cooperators

Copies of all agreements are maintained in Central Files of the C-T Headquarters office and the dispatch center.

D. Equipment and rental Agreements

The Idaho –Wyoming Contracting section is responsible for the completion of Emergency Equipment Rental Agreements (EERA's) for the three forests under their authority. The EERA program is the primary tool used to initiate these agreements, and copies are available in the Eastern Idaho Interagency Service and Supply Plan located in the dispatch center.

E. Contract Suppression and Prescribed Fire Resources

The C-T has the responsibility to dispatch engines and crews for National Wildland Fire Engine and Crew contracts. When mobilizing crews within local and Geographic Areas, National Contracts will be ordered after agency and cooperator resources are mobilized, but before EERA resources. Copies of the contracts are located in the Eastern Idaho Interagency Service and Supply Plan, located in the dispatch center.

VI. Monitoring and Evaluation**A. Annual Monitoring Requirements**

Monitoring is accomplished on all hazardous fuels projects as well as all treatments completed in support of resource management activities on the Forest (*e.g.*, wildlife habitat improvement projects, site preparation). Monitoring plans are developed during the project-planning phase and are included in each prescribed fire burn plan or project folder.

Fire monitoring is necessary to determine suppression needs, analyze potential Wildland Fire Use opportunities, determine if prescribed management ignited fires are within prescription, and determine if prescribed fires accomplish management goals.

Goals of the monitoring program are as follows.

- Verify that prescribed fire program objectives are being met through documentation and analysis of fire effects.
- Increase knowledge of fire behavior and effects on ecosystems.
- Document basic information for all prescribed fires and keep all monitoring information organized and properly backed-up.
- Adhere to standardized data collection techniques determined by agency policy or direction.
- Use monitoring data to help develop information for the public.
- Identify areas in which research should be initiated.
- Provide adequate training opportunities to employees to increase their knowledge and skills.
- Follow trends in plant communities as related to fire effects.

The Caribou-Targhee NF monitoring will follow the three levels described in FSM 1922.7, which are: implementation, effectiveness and validation. Implementation monitoring will be used to determine if prescriptions, projects and activities are implemented as designed; and are in compliance with fire program and Land Management Plan objectives, standards and guidelines. Effectiveness monitoring will be used to determine if plans, prescriptions, projects and activities are effective in meeting management objectives, standards and guidelines. Effectiveness monitoring begins after fire program prescription, project or activity has been implemented. Validation monitoring is used to determine whether initial data, assumptions and coefficients used to develop the fire management program are correct, or if changes need to be made to the program.

B. Land Management Plan Required Monitoring

Monitoring requirements vary between the Caribou NF and Targhee NF. There are no monitoring requirements specifically related to Fire Management in the Land Management Plan for the Curlew National Grassland. The revised Land Management Plans for Caribou NF and Targhee NF contain the following objectives that are reported in CTNF Monitoring and Evaluation Report.

Targhee National Forest

- Evaluate Wildland Fire Use for each of the seven ecological subsections by 2007. [Currently five subsections have been completed. For 2005 all subsections on the Targhee side of the C-T will be completed.]
- Develop a Wildland Fire Use plan to address wildland fires in the Grizzly Bear Core Area (Rx 2.6.2) and Grizzly Bear Habitat (Rx 5.3.5), and coordinate with any adjacent wilderness fire plans. [This has been completed.]
- Perform hazardous fuels reduction on at least 2,000 acres annually for wildlife habitat improvement, fuels management, and forest health. [This objective has been met or exceeded annually since 1997.]

Caribou National Forest

- Develop and begin implementation of a prioritized strategy for Wildland-Urban Interface projects within one year of signing the ROD. Priority should be given to the ecological subsections where this activity is emphasized. [The first subsection was completed 2004. For 2005 an additional two more subsections will be added.]
- Fuel levels in the Wildland-Urban Interface are monitored and reported annually.
- Evaluate at least one subsection each year for Wildland Fire Use. Priority should be given to the ecological subsections where this activity is emphasized.
- The Condition Class status of vegetation is monitored and reported every 5 years.

C. Reporting Requirements

The Caribou-Targhee Forest completes the following reporting requirements:

- Individual Fire Reports -- FSM 5182.1
- Annual Fire Report -- FSM 5183.2
- Incident Status Summary (ICS-209) for wildfires that exceed 100 acres in timber cover types, or 300 acres in mixed shrubland/grassland cover types
- Fire Fighting Production Capability (FFPC-FN) at the budget -- RR 5100-2 and by letter
- National Fire Plan Reports (NFPORS):
 - Rehabilitation and Restoration -- Acres and/or miles rehabilitated or restored
 - Hazardous Fuel Treatment (FN: Non-Wildland-Urban Interface) -- Acres of prescribed fire and/or mechanical treatment
 - Hazardous Fuel Treatment (FW: Wildland-Urban Interface) -- Acres of prescribed fire and/or mechanical treatment
 - State Fire Assistance -- Communities Assisted
 - Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted

D. Completed Fire Research

A better understanding of the role of fire in local ecosystems is contingent upon existing and future fire history studies, and ongoing fire history data collection. This information has been and will continue to be instrumental in effective fire planning. Although much work has been accomplished on fire effects in common communities, many species and communities in the Caribou-Targhee National Forest have received little attention. As deficiencies are noted, research should be initiated to determine fire effects.

E. Needed Fire Research

Implementation of the FMP is not contingent on completion of research concerning the fire regime and fire effects on vegetation. Instead, the fire management plan is based on the best available science. Fire research adds to the cumulative scientific understanding and knowledge of the role of fire in the described ecosystems. Subsequently, adaptive management practices evolve as valuable studies continue in conjunction with implementation of the FMP. Fire managers need sound scientific information with which to determine fire management objectives and strategies, natural ranges of variability for vegetation types, fire frequencies, condition classes, fire effects, and historic fire intensities.

As funding allows, research will be initiated to determine fire effects where little is known on various ecosystems, habitats, threatened and endangered species and their distributional limits. Research will continue to improve custom fuel models to better predict fire behavior. Finally, research and risk analysis will continue to demonstrate how best to protect resources, identify where fire is undesirable, and determine the importance, value and potential for adverse fire impacts to those resources.

